



The Marker Lamp



Volume 61

Number 3

Summer 2015

Lessons learned from a lifetime of trains

Part Two page 18

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Taming a Western Cattle Operation in N-Scale T-Track

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Lone Star Region Call Board

The Marker Lamp

The Official Publication of
The Lone Star Region of the
National Model Railroad Association

Volume 61, Number 3

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The editorial policy of The Marker Lamp, the official publication of The Lone Star Region, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroad, within the confines of good taste and responsibility. The Marker Lamp is published once each quarter by and for the members of The Lone Star Region of The National Model Railroad Association. Articles appearing in The Marker Lamp are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the officers or membership of The Lone Star Region or The National Model Railroad Association.

Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Donna Orr, 2625 Rolling Meadows Dr., Rockwall, TX 75087 (972) 722-4769 dlo-ris@sbcglobal.net

*Cover photo
by Lee Bangma*

Submission Deadlines & Advertising Closing Dates

Winter Issue.....January 15
Spring IssueApril 15
Summer IssueJuly 15
Fall Issue.....October 15

Internet Post Date:

Approx. 30 Days After Deadline.

Materials received after the deadline will be held for the next issue.

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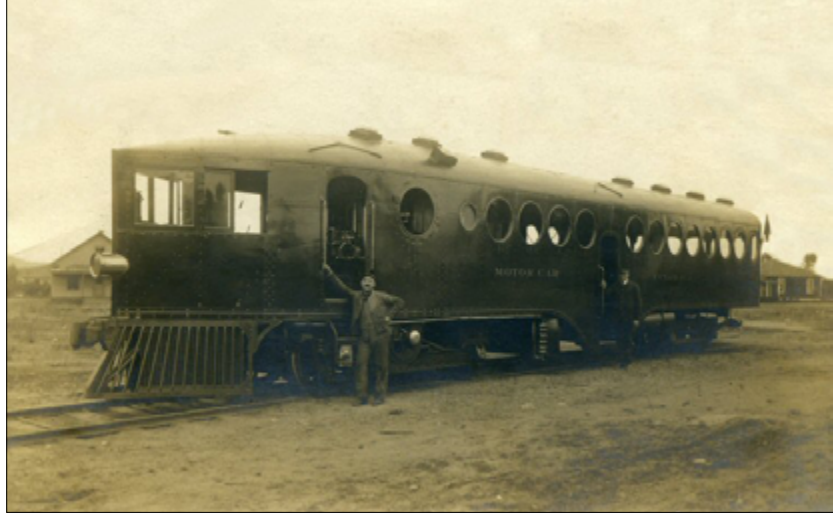
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President's Message

by Steve Barkley, MMR
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The LSR 2015 Tex-La Doodlebug convention in Beaumont was fun! 107 members and family attended the first convention to be held anywhere in southeast Texas. George Bohn and Dave Cummings chaired the convention, helped by many, many members and family members from throughout the Lone Star Region.

WHAT'S A DOODLEBUG?

My wife, Judy, pointed out that nowhere in the convention program, the banquet speech, nor anywhere else was "doodlebug" defined. So, to clear this up, as a public service, I researched "doodlebug" in Wikipedia.

The term "doodlebug" is one common name for a woodlouse (plural woodlice), also known by many common names, is an isopod crustacean with a rigid, segmented, long exoskeleton and fourteen jointed limbs. Woodlice form the suborder Oniscidea within the order Isopoda, with over 5,000 known species.

The term "doodlebug" was given to the first successful motor car, the Union Pacific #1 McKeen Motor Car, built in late 1904 to March 1905. When the motor car first arrived for service in Kearney, Nebraska, the switchman looked at the Maroon colored, knife edge nose, gasoline motor car, and proclaimed, "Look at the potato bug." Although this is not when the doodlebug term was coined, it was probably around the same time that railroaders created this nickname.

Potato bug is another common name for the Woodlouse, also known to children of all ages as the "rolly polly." See the resemblance?

CLINICS

The Lone Star Region Vice President, Bob Barnett, arranged a full slate of clinics. Dr. John McCall presented clinics and the banquet speech on Doodlebug operations in Texas. Both the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific subsidiaries ran a network of doodlebug served routes throughout Texas. Beaumont originated many schedules including one that ran from Beaumont down to Boliver Peninsula opposite Galveston. Dr. McCall illustrated his clinics and banquet speech with vintage photographs.

We were fortunate to have Dr. McCall at our convention. He spent many, many hours to research a subject that was near and dear to him. We were the lucky recipients of his work. Among many other books, Dr. McCall authored two books on the Santa Fe's gas-electric fleet, *The Doodlebugs* published in 1977 and *Son of Doodlebug* published in 2003.

David Nicastro and his son, Sam, covered 69 ways to make rust using everything from commercial weathering powders to common household products. They included a handout that rated each method by ease of application, messiness, and results. The well-known consumer rating magazine has nothing to compare!

Mike Gulley is a member of the Southeast Texas and Gulf model railroad club in Orange, Texas. He is an expert in the use of the Digitrax Zephyr all in one DCC power station and command center. He explained the utility, value and use of the Zephyr.

Dr. Paul Bender is a member of the computer science faculty of McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana. His clinic looked at using a free software

program, JMRI, to program DCC equipped locomotives. To use JMRI, you'll need a computer, a connection between your computer and your DCC system, and JMRI installed on your computer.

I personally use an older Windows 7 laptop to run JMRI. It's connected to my DCC bus using a Loco-Buffer manufactured by RR-Cirkits. If your local dealer does not stock the Loco-Buffer you can obtain one from a number of mail order suppliers. JMRI is free. Here's where to find it: <http://jmri.sourceforge.net/>

The convention website is still up. Check out all the clinicians at <http://lsr2015.com/index.html>

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS

I was delighted to present four President's Awards at the convention:

WILLIAM (BILL) FITZGERALD

The first went to William (Bill) Fitzgerald. Bill has been an NMRA member and model railroader for over 50 years. I met Bill shortly after I started to build my model railroad in 1982. He was part of a group of friends that enjoyed working together.

One Tuesday night Bill arrived at our weekly meeting carrying a mass of papers that described the then new concept of building modules and then combining them to make a complete layout. While that is common today, it was very new and exciting 30+ years ago. He convinced us to each build a module and we did. This was the start of modular layouts in Southeast Texas. The resulting layout has been displayed from Houston to Longview, Galveston, and many points between. Many of the original modules are still in use 33 years after they were first built.

Bill was awarded the President's Award for pioneering modular layouts in Texas.

THE FREITAG FAMILY

Where would the Lone Star Region be without Gilbert and Virginia Freitag, their son, Gilbert Jr. and Gil's brother, Gus Freitag? Gil Sr. built, maintained, and still willingly shares one of the finest model railroads in the country. He has encouraged and inspired many of us to challenge ourselves to build and share better models. Gil earned MMR #91 early in the formative years of the NMRA achievement program.

Virginia has been a strong, vocal force in encouraging participation by wives in Lone Star Region functions. She reminds us all that model railroading is a family friendly hobby.

Gil Jr. has participated in the hobby with his family and has dutifully supported his father in chasing trains throughout the United States and many foreign countries. Now that his Dad has some health problems, Gil Jr. has made sure that his Dad can still travel to enjoy trains. Of course, Gil Jr. enjoys them too!

The first track that was laid on my initial model railroad in Beaumont came from G&G Model Shop in Houston, Texas. It is the oldest model shop in Texas and is still owned by Gus Freitag. Here's the link to the website: <http://www.gandgmodelshop.com/>

Gus and his daughter, Diane supported this convention as they have many prior conventions. They are a delight to do business with!

DONNA ORR

Donna Orr is the LSR Treasurer. She encouraged the LSR to apply for Internal Revenue Service section 501(c)(3) non-profit status. Following the 2015 mid-year meeting, she completed the application and forwarded it to the IRS. Within weeks the IRS granted the LSR tax exempt status. This has already saved the LSR over \$1,000.00 in sales tax that otherwise would have been charged on convention related expenses.

The IRS status letter may be found on the LSR website in the constitution and bylaws section here: http://lonestarregion.com/sites/default/files/documents/lsr_501c3/lsr_501c3.pdf

LARRY SWIGERT

Larry Swigert is the LSR membership committee co-chair. He has worked to build the membership of the LSR. He has energetically encouraged all divisions of the LSR to apply techniques that have worked to raise membership in the LSR. While membership in other regions is declining, over the past ten years membership in the LSR has increased by over ten percent!

The median age of NMRA members is 66. Larry and his helpers throughout the LSR are bringing in members that will lower that age in our region.

2015 NATIONAL NARROW GAUGE CONVENTION

The 35th national Narrow Gauge Convention will be held this coming September 2nd – 5th in Houston. This is the first national model railroading convention to be held in Texas in many, many years. Chuck Lind among many LSR members is chairing the convention.

Check out the website: <http://www.nngc-2015.com/> Plan on attending and consider helping with the convention. They still need volunteers!

FINAL THOUGHTS

The 2016 LSR convention will be held June 22nd – 25th in Arlington, Texas. Registration is open. Here's the website: <http://daylightexpress.com/> Mike Mackey and John Garfield are co-chairs of the convention. They gave an exciting presentation in Beaumont. My wife and I are already signed up to go.

Have a great Fall! Work on your layout. Go to at least one train show. Remember that model railroading is fun and that we can and should share our love of this hobby with our friends and family. **ML**



Engineering Beauty through Truth

by Riley Triggs

rileytriggs@gmail.com

ponyrr.blogspot.com



An intrepid explorer on Steve Nelson's MKT}MoPac layout possibly looking for truth in realism. Photo by author.

I spent all my time this issue on wrangling a staggering 106 (!) pages worth of material, so I am going to cheat and reprint my latest blog post on Steve Nelson's excellent recreation of his boyhood corner of Missouri in HO scale. There are a whole bunch of photos at <http://modelrailroaddesign.blogspot.com/2015/06/layout-visit-mktmopac-by-steve-nelson.html>

Recreate versus **Represent**

I hadn't been out to Steve's in several years and there

has been a lot of progress. A good amount of scenery is in, and it convinces me that it will be a fantastically crafted and executed landscape for running trains. Steve is a master at trees, which is fortunate because he will have thousands of them, but more so, he is becoming a master at recreating exquisite realistic features in the landscape.

We talked about his approach to modeling scenery, and we mused that usually modelers represent features in the landscape, but Steve's approach is to recreate features, which leads to a more accurate and convincing



Sunflowers highlight the guardrail at the bend in the road.

presentation. I might attribute this approach to Steve's engineering background, which shows a tendency towards attention to detail, intolerance of inaccuracy, and a matter-of-fact approach of modeling exactly the way something is built or looks. I'm very excited by his attention to this difference. As he gave me the grand tour, I saw examples of his methodical modeling in every scene.

By the end of my tour, I was completely spoiled by the realism and attention to detail already on Steve's layout. He is about half way done with the scenery, but it already feels like a finished layout because the scenes are so complete.

I will poke Steve a little here because he should have been operating already, but he is afraid that will bring his modeling to a halt. There is only so much modeling time to slice up, and I don't blame him for wanting to keep the momentum going. I think he may find, though, that operating is going to beg him to make some track plan changes and force some scenery redoing.

Not a problem, though, as Steve routinely will tear out a section of scenery if it isn't good enough. Anything he does tear up for track realignment will quickly be put back together, and I bet it will be even better than what was already there.

I am inspired by Steve's work to recreate and not just to represent the landscape, trains and operating procedures of a very specific place and time in railroading history. His research and attention to detail are very good examples of modeling to engage.

The effort and care he expends in trying to understand how things work and relate to each other add another deep layer of modeling that is indicated by visual evidence in great looking models.

On Steve's layout, beauty is not truth, but it is often a precursor to it.

Riley



Up The Tracks

By Bill Dryden NMRA & LSR Life Member

Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA Scale Rails and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

NOTE: With this edition's column, I have added information on Excursion Railroads located within the LSR area.

Lone Star Region 65th Annual Convention (2016)

Check the LSR website <http://www.lonestarregion.com/convention.shtml>

Come all!!!

PARTICIPATE!!!

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division – Allen

The Trinity River Division meets on the Second Saturday of every month at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Allen. Occasionally the day or branch changes due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the e-mail meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting. If you would like to be added to the e-mail list contact Jerry Hoverson at JKHoverson@gmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin

The Cen-Tex Division meets quarterly at the main branch of the Round Rock Library in downtown Round Rock. Meetings include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see <http://centexnmra.org> or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to our mail list.

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio

The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Turner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

Houston Area Live Steamers

HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the third Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White – rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving

The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or member clubs.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum

Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street, in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot; New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities,

additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Howard Young (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrmm.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills

The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cao@twmrc.org.

EVENTS AND SHOWS

August

23rd – 29th Portland Daylight Express – 2015 NMRA National Convention. Portland, OR. For more information: <http://www.nmra2015portland.org/>

September

2nd – 5th 35th Annual National Narrow Gauge Convention. Houston, TX. For more information <http://www.nngc-2015.com/>

19th – 20th 33rd Annual Temple Model Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Adults \$6.00, Children 12 and under free with adult, discount for seniors and active duty military and dependents. Frank Mayborn Convention Center, Main Hall, Rooms 1-7, and Lobby, 3303 N. 3rd Street, Temple, TX. For more information: www.centramod.com.

26th – 27th 1st Annual Fall Plano Train Show. (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX. For more information, visit <http://www.dfwtrainshows.com>.

October

2nd – 3rd 10th Annual Cotton Belt Railroad Symposium. Fri. 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Sat. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission: "N/A". Sam Rayburn Student Center, Texas A&M – Commerce, Commerce, TX. For more information www.cottonbeltroute.com

3rd TW TrainWorx 4th Annual Layout Festival. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission: \$15 per Person, \$25 per Family (Kind donations accepted for the Ronald McDonald House of Dallas). 2808 McGowan St., Dallas, TX. For information, contact Dorcie at (214) 634-2965 or <http://www.twtrainworx.com>

3rd – 4th Galveston Model Railroad Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free. Galveston Railroad Museum, 2602 Santa Fe Place, Galveston, TX. For more information Sandy Cobb or Morris Gould (409) 765-5700 or <http://www.galvestonrrmuseum.com/events.html>

3rd – 4th 2015 San Antonio Train Show. (Sponsored by Alamo Model Railroad Engineers) Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Adults \$11, Children \$6 (10-17). Expo Hall A at the Freeman Coliseum, 3201 E. Houston St., San Antonio TX. For more information <http://www.txtransportationmuseum.org/event-amre-train-show.php>.

10th – 11th 2015 Texas Western 2nd Annual Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Admission \$7, Kids under 12 Free (**Present this ad for \$1 off!**). Forest Hill Civic and Convention Center, 6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cao@twmrc.org.

16th – 17th Southwest O Scale Meet; Fort Worth Academy, 7301 Dutch Branch Road, Fort Worth, TX. For times and registration information <http://www.oscalesw.com>

17th – 18th Grapevine Texas Train Show. **CANCELLED**

Oct 31st – Nov 1st New Braunfels Railroad Museum's 7th Annual Train Show. Sat. 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 pm to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$7 (18 – up), Children \$2 (5 – 17). New Braunfels Civic Center, 375 S. Castell Ave., New Braunfels, TX. For more information call Jim Edmondson (830) 629-2071 or JEdmondson@satx.rr.com

November

14th Cowtown Model Railroad Club Holiday Train Show. Sat. 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission \$5, Kids under 12 Free. Game On Arena Sports Center, 251 Settlement Drive, Fort Worth, TX. For more information www.cmrrc.webs.com

21st Texas Train Show. Admission is \$5 at the Door / Kids enter FREE! Christopher Hall, 1602 Thousand Oaks Drive, San Antonio, TX. For more information <http://www.texasrainshow.net>

December 2016

TBD Gregg County Historical Museum Holiday Trains. 2015 Holiday Schedule TBA. Adults \$TBA, Seniors 60 & Up \$TBA, School Aged Children \$TBA, Museum Members – Free. Gregg County Historical Museum, 214 North Fredonia Street, Longview, TX. For more information, call the museum for more information and extended dates & hours (903) 753-5840, or <http://www.gregghistorical.org>

TBD 4th Annual Holiday Toy Trains at the Depot. 2015 Christmas Holiday Schedule TBA. Adults Free. Nacogdoches' Southern Pacific Train Depot, Corner of West Main Street & Old Tyler Road, 2 Blocks West of Business US-59 on West Main Street, Nacogdoches, TX. Sponsors of this year's free exhibit are: Center for Regional Heritage Research – Dept. of Stephen F. Austin University; City of Nacogdoches and Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce

January 2016

16th – 17th Dallas Area Train Show. (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX. For more information, visit <http://www.dfwtrainshows.com>.

30th – 31st SAMRA 40th Annual Jamboree & Train Show. Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adult - \$7, Under 16 Free (Limit 3) with paid adult admission Carmack Event Center, 1948 Austin Highway, San Antonio, TX. For more information: <http://samratx.org/>.

February 2016

20th – 21st 2015 World's Greatest Hobby on Tour. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Adults ??? Kids Under 16: Free (must be accompanied by a parent. No limit to the number of kids per adult).. Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center; 200 E. Market Street; San Antonio, TX. For more information <http://www.wghshow.com>

May 2016

21st Shreveport 2nd Annual Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free. RiverView Hall, 600 Clyde Fant Parkway, Shreveport, LA. For more information, Randy Guy (318) 402-8896 or e-mail erandguy7@gmail.com

Excursion Train Trips

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

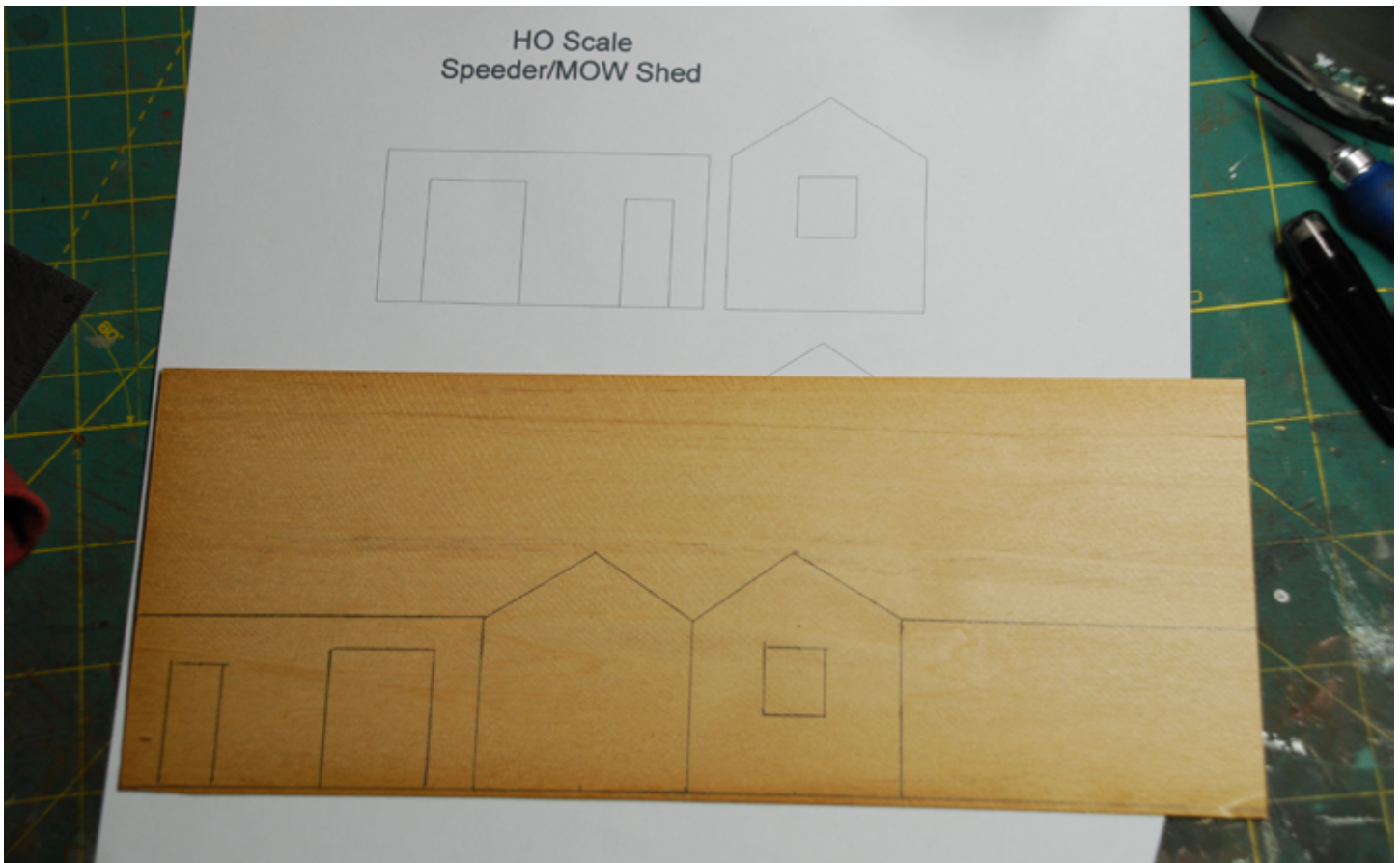
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Procrastination

By Duane Richardson, MMR
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

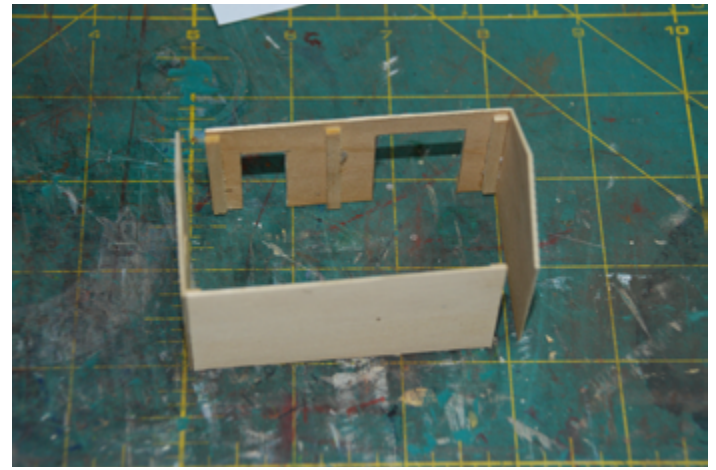
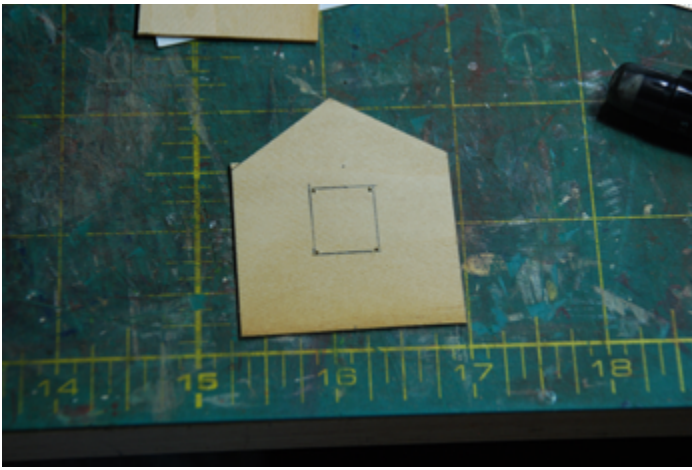


Procrastination...we are all guilty of it. There are always good reasons for it or at least a good excuse or two but when you boil it down there is nothing like a deadline to get you motivated to finish a project...or to write an article. Going back to school projects as children we always seem to wait until the last possible moment to get anything started or to finish what we had started. It's the same with our modeling.

Having a convention coming to town has inspired more layout progress than anything in history. It motivated my Dad to get some more track laid and a start on some scenery when the National Narrow Gauge convention came to Kansas City last fall. It motivates us to finish our contest models (more on that in a moment) and occasionally we miss the deadline (like this article... thanks to the Marker Lamp editors for allowing me some

extra time). There was a joke floated amongst the Master Model Railroader's (MMR's) about procrastination needing to become a 12th Achievement Program Certificate. The only issue was if you actually completed the paperwork you wouldn't qualify for it any longer.

I started putting the outline for this article together before the convention but was side tracked by a few trips that delayed me in finishing my contest models. In fact, I wasn't even able to get the second one ready at all. I was only able to get one model ready to go but it wasn't finished when I got to the convention. It was mostly done but I still had a few finishing touches to add to it. I checked into my room at the hotel and went straight to work. I was up until 1am or so working on it. I got up the next morning and made a run for some supplies that I had forgot to pack (3 toolboxes full of stuff



and I still managed not to bring something...go figure). I got back to the room, put the last of the details in place and took it down to the Contest Room to enter the model. Sadly this isn't the first time I have done this.

When I mentioned this to my Dad he pointed out I have a long history of finishing a model and taking it down to the Contest Room while parts were still drying on the model. The only solace in this is that I know I'm not alone. I have heard stories of Gil and Virginia Freitag driving to a convention in a motor home...Virginia is driving and Gil is in the back scratchbuilding windows to finish off a model. In short we all need to plan ahead better than we do. It takes some of the stress out of it and if nothing else it would mean I wouldn't be packing 3 toolboxes so I can finish my model.

I bring this up because it does lead to what I had originally started for this article. It's that there has been a sharp drop off in modeling in our hobby. Not just in scratchbuilding in favor of building some of the really nice kits that are available but it's not even doing that and buying our models Ready to Run (or Ready to Repair as I like to call it).

For some it satisfies a need. They want it now and this allows them to make progress to get a layout finished quickly so they can operate. For me, the building of a layout is something that will take some time because it's a stress reliever, and I enjoy the journey too much to rush it. I like to build.

Because of this, and I really like the challenge, I tend to scratchbuild a lot of my models. Especially the structures. Among other things it's this skill set that we have been trying to pass along at our Division's monthly meetings.

At these meetings we have done a series of Make & Take clinics with the idea being an introduction to scratch building. They get a hands on lesson and something to put on the layout when they are done. Over the last 5 years we have seen some of these projects end up in the Contest Room and several have won awards.

For some the term scratchbuilding sends shivers down their spine. I've never really understood why. In a clinic I had a modeler tell me that they could never

scratchbuild. It was 'just too hard' yet I had seen their layout and it was covered in Craftsmen kits. I mentioned that he was building some really complex buildings that were nothing but a box of sticks.

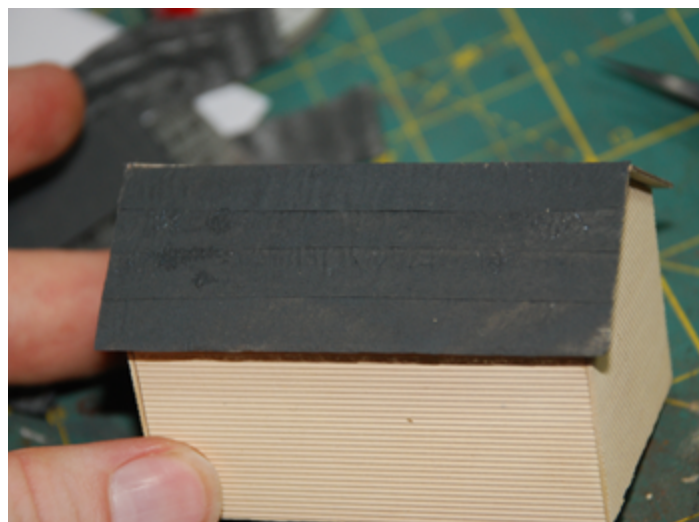
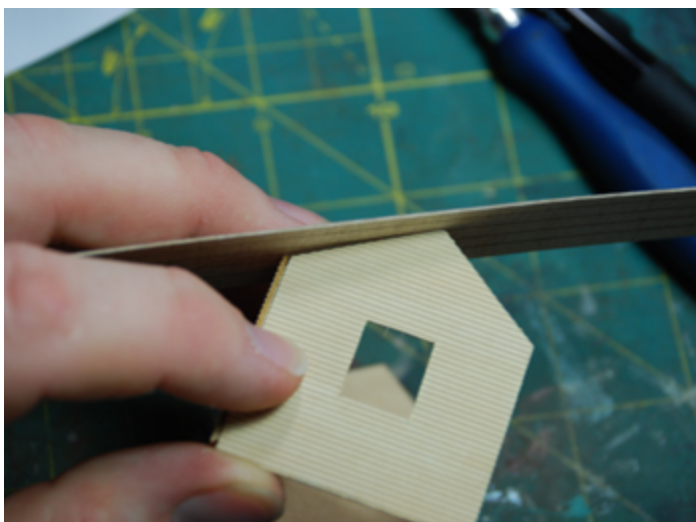
When I pointed out that the only thing different between that and scratchbuilding was that somebody bought some materials and put it in a box for him he was amazed. It had never dawned on him that he had been basically scratchbuilding for years. So for our Make and Take clinics we decided to take a pen and burst the bubble around scratchbuilding.

This spring we started what is now our 5th Make and Take project which was to build 2 speeder shed type structures. We wanted something that a pair of on the layout wouldn't look out of place and the reason for 2 would be to build one in styrene and the other in wood. We divided the members into 4 groups. Each group was a particular skill set.

The Beginners group would build the sheds with clapboard siding using window and door castings. The Intermediate group would use the same materials but they would be shown how to modify the siding and casting to provide a more custom look. The Advanced group would make their sheds on backer boards and making clapboard board on board. They would also have to make their own windows and doors. The last group I called Psychotic. They would not only make their own windows and doors but they would also build board on board over 2x4 stud wall. Each group was allowed to add whatever castings they wanted and detail out the structure as they saw fit.

The shed itself is a very basic structure and was chosen because it can be built easily and quickly. With each group getting progressively harder it offered a challenge to everyone's skill set and slowed down each group in the hopes that they would all finish about the same time. At the July meeting we finished our sheds with a weathering clinic where the members were able to get some hands on experience weathering their projects.

Building the basic shed is a pretty straight forward process. We choose clapboard siding for the build-



ing so turn your siding over and draw on the flat back where all the windows and doors need to go. Always double check to ensure that you have the clapboard facing the correct way before you layout your cut lines.

A few light passes with a sharp Exacto blade will cut out the walls. You should never try and make a cut in a single pass. This will only lead to miss-cut parts and or injury. Once you have the wall cut out it's time to cut out the windows and doors. Measure the internal dimensions of your parts and draw that on the back of the wall. Using a small drill bit, drill a hole in each corner of the opening you are going to make. This gives the blade a place to start and stop when making cuts and it also prevents any splits that may happen in the wood to travel past the corner.

Paint all your walls and castings before assembling the building. I even do any wet weathering prior to assembly. This allows you to put some weight on the walls while they dry so they don't warp. Now, it's also a good idea not to put any more liquid on the wood than you have to do keep the coat of paint thin. A few thin coats are better than one thick coat. It's also a good idea that if you put a liquid like paint or stain on a wooden wall then you need to apply it to both sides. This will also cut down on warping.

Once the walls are dry you should install the doors and windows. Next, we assemble the walls. This is what I was taught as the L 7 method. First we take a wall with a peak and a side wall and glue those into an L shape. The other 2 make 7 shape. When the two are dry then you can assemble them together to complete your shed. Remember that when you have a wall with a peak that it always goes on the outside of the joint. If you don't you will have a gap when you put the roof on created by the side wall being on the outside.

If you use corner posts this also acts as your trim and the wall just butt joint to those. Northeastern makes a corner post piece that is like what comes in the Campbell kits so it's a stick of wood with a notch on two sides.

The walls glue into the notch so it is both corner post and interior wall support. If you just glue the walls to one another which is how I do it then you will need some 1x material to create trim. Either 1x4 or 1x6 trims out your corners and roof edges nicely.

A thin piece of plywood (around 1/32) makes great roof decking and it is stiff enough not to warp like cardboard can. The choice for roofing was up to our modelers but most chose tarpaper. My favorite way to make tarpaper is to airbrush a single layer of Kleenex (without any lotion) with Grimey Black. Cut that into 3 foot wide strips and glue on so it runs from side to side starting at the bottom.

To cap the roof a single strip folded in half so it covers both sides at the top and your roof is basically done. From there you can add stove pipes, plumbing vents and other roof detail as you see fit. It's also a good idea to turn the building over and install rafter tails made from 2x6's so you have the look like the roof trusses are sticking out like they do on the prototype.

Building small structures like this are a great way to get your feet wet. You need several of them around the layout and they can help you learn new skills without using a lot of materials.

Until next time, keep the boiler full, the fires hot, and your wheels on the rails. **ML**



Solvable Challenges

By Peter Kazmir
pakazmir@gmail.com

In the last **Marker Lamp** we walked through an introduction to operations. I hope some of you got excited and decided to give operations a shot, perhaps even host operations on your home layout. To many of us, the idea of hosting operating sessions sounds overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. Here's an overview of what it takes.

Layout Design

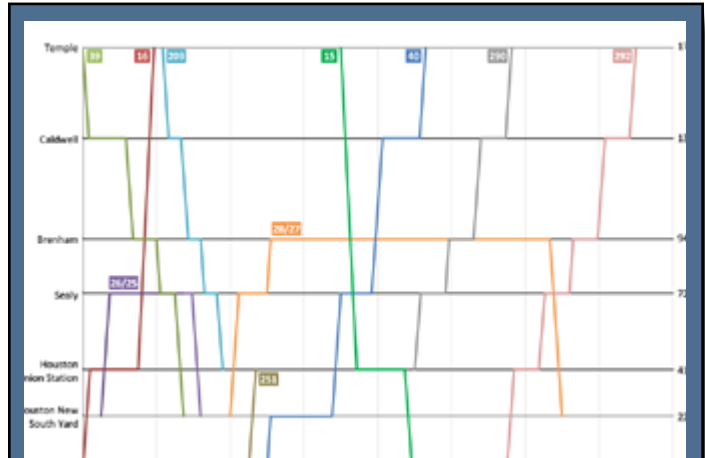
First off, you need a layout that you can operate. That doesn't mean that your layout has to be designed for operations and support half a dozen operators, and it doesn't mean your railroad needs to feature a lot of switching.

Operators have all sorts of interests. Some like switching puzzles. Some like running main line freight and passenger trains. Some like keeping a yard running smoothly. Some like lonely locals. That's great news, because if your layout is focused on switching, passenger operations, or branch line operations you'll probably find operators who share your interest, leading not only to great operating sessions but also to life-long friendships.

No matter what your operating interests are or what size your layout is, operating sessions tend to be more interesting when they include what I call "solvable challenges." There are opportunities for solvable challenges on layouts of all shapes and sizes. They're really all about simulating prototypical operations. A simple example is using a fast clock. For example, if you're into running passenger trains, try to keep to a tight schedule dodging freights on the way.

However, don't forget the "solvable" part. Just like a game you can't figure out how to win, it's frustrating to operate on a model railroad with rules that are overly complex and hard to understand.

Finally, if you do have the opportunity to design a model railroad for operations, there are plenty of books and other resources out there that can help. However, I'd make two suggestions: First, look at your favorite prototype...they have to operate in the real world, which is full of solvable (and some maybe-not-so-solvable) challenges...and they've already figured out how to deal with them. Second, make sure you include wide aisles!



String Diagram:

A string diagram (also called a train diagram) represents where individual trains will be at different times. The sloped lines represent trains in transit between towns (the steeper the line, the faster the train). Where the lines are flat, a train is stopped (or switching). String diagrams can be used to determine when trains should meet and where for smooth operations. This diagram was generated in Microsoft Excel and includes some of the trains that operate on Jack Merkel's Lone Star and Santa Fe.

Operating Session Design

Okay, so you've got a layout that has some operations potential. Next you need to figure out how to operate it! Even if you want to run trains without a schedule, you need to come up with a plan for your operating sessions.

Probably the first step for developing such a plan is to determine how many operators you'll have. This is

largely a factor of your layout's size; you don't want to have a lot of your operators sitting around for a long period of time without anything to do. Consider the various jobs you might have on your layout, including engineers, dispatchers, yard masters, switchers, conductors, brakemen, firemen, hostlers, train order operators, and so on.

Your plan could be as simple as developing a list of trains to run in each direction plus maybe a list of jobs available during a session. If you're using a schedule, a string diagram which charts where each train will be on the layout at any given moment will help you to see if you're creating any unsolvable challenges (like corn field meets). It will also help to avoid jobs where operators have to wait a couple of (real) hours to do work (however prototypical that is). Even if you're modeling a prototype's schedule, a string diagram is valuable since selective compression and fast clocks may require some alterations.

Sessions don't always have a consistent number of operators, so consider what you'll do if a couple folks call in sick or bring a friend. Can you remove a train from the schedule without impacting the rest of the session?

If you're doing more than running trains from one end to the other, you'll need to implement a way to communicate where individual cars on the railroad should go. There are many ways to do this; as was discussed in last month's column, the more popular ways include car cards and waybills and switch lists (produced by hand or by computer). Those aren't the only ways, though, and not all of them include paperwork.

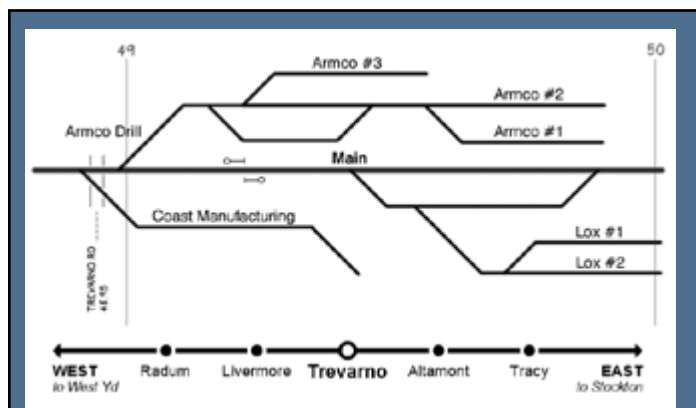
You'll also need to decide how you want to control the traffic on your railroad. If you have a two-person operating session, that might be as simple as just talking to each other informally. If you've got a layout the size of a three car garage with a dozen operators, you'll probably need a more formal system. As with car routing there are a number of ways to do this, mostly based upon prototypical railroad practices, including different kinds of signaling, dispatching, and warrants.

Preparing the Railroad

Next up, you need to get your railroad ready for operating sessions.

First, focus on making sure your railroad runs smoothly. That includes clean track and locomotive wheels, track and switches that are in gauge and wired properly, couplers and wheel sets that are adjusted properly, and fresh batteries in throttles and radios.

Operator orientation – for experienced and new operators alike – is also important. Consider a handout and signage (lots of signage!) to help your operators out. Make sure tracks and motorized switches are labeled in a way that is easy to read and operators can easily figure out where the towns and industries are along the line, especially in relation to each other. In an orientation packet or rule book you could include things like the schedule, how to use the throttle, special instructions,



Signs:

One good way to help orient operators is to place signs on the fascia in each town that show where that town is in relation to others on (and off) the layout. These are often combined with local track diagrams showing where the various tracks and industries are in that town. This sign is from Tommy Holt's WP First Sub layout in Austin, Texas.

how to use the radio or phones, how to use the dispatching panel, and so on.

If you can, provide some conveniences for the operators. This includes things like (safe) places to put drinks, throttle pockets (or Velcro strips), plenty of places to plug in throttles (if not wireless), and small writing platforms or hooks to hang clipboards with switch lists. If you're using a fast clock, position it where operators can see it wherever they are on the railroad. Also keep in mind that operators may need breaks from time to time. Most operating session hosts I know will have a place to operators sit and rest occasionally, especially for road crews between trains.

In addition to setting up the railroad for operations, you'll need to prepare for each session. This includes again checking batteries and cleaning track and wheels. It might also include printing (or writing) out switch lists and positioning the cars and trains on the layout in their proper positions to make the session work properly. (Some car forwarding schemes support continuous traffic movements, but even if you use one of these you'll probably want to check to see if the cars are where the system thinks they are.) This "staging" can take anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours depending on the railroad and operating scheme.

Beta Testing

If you're not familiar with Beta testing, it's a term that is used in software development: Before some new or improved software is released to the general public,

a smaller group of customers will use it for a period of time to determine if any bugs or other important issues escaped the notice of the development team. Model railroad operations greatly benefits from Beta testing.

Try running some of the jobs yourself to see if they work the way you thought they would. Then host one or two simplified operating sessions. Make sure the railroad runs smoothly (maybe you'll find a problem when eight people are using wireless throttles at once), make sure the schedule makes sense (maybe it turns out some of your operators take longer to work jobs than you thought they might), and make sure your car forwarding and traffic control schemes work well.

During those first couple of sessions things probably won't go that smoothly but your operators will be happy knowing you are working together to iron out the kinks.

Highball

Once you've got things running smoothly you can add in more trains, operators, jobs, and solvable challenges. You could even add more prototypical rules and practices (like radio conduct, unlocking switches, running air brake tests and so on).

Always, after each session, make sure to ask for feedback about what things went well, what things didn't, and what things the operators would like to try next time. Try to write it down because when you go back the following week to fix a janky coupler you're not going to remember which one it was!

Pretty soon you and your operators will be old hands at operating your railroad.

What's Next?

Now that we've covered the basics of operations and hosting operating sessions, we'll dive into specific aspects of operations in more detail in future columns. Some of the topics on deck include car routing schemes like car cards and waybills, traffic management schemes including signaling, jobs on the railroad, and more. If you have a topic you'd like to see covered, please send me an email at peter@kazmir.net.

See you down the tracks!

Recommended Resources:

- Realistic Model Railroad Operation, 2nd Edition by Tony Koester
- Track Planning for Realistic Operation by John Armstrong
- How to Operate Your Model Railroad by Bruce Chubb (out of print)
- Model Railroad Operations Special Interest Group (OpSIG)
- How to Play With Trains, by Lance Mindheim,



Fast Clock:

These are two examples of a fast clock; one is a digital system from Logic Rail Technologies and the other is a regular analog clock that has been modified to run faster than real time. Fast clocks can usually be set to run at different speeds like 2x, 3x or 4x normal time. Using a fast clock can let you simulate running trains in real time even though the model railroad is much smaller. A task that takes 5 minutes in real time can be treated like 20 minutes on the fast clock.

Model Railroad Craftsman

- Lance Mindheim's Blog (especially the entries in the "Operations" category)
- Suggestions for First Operating Session, forum post, Model Railroad Hobbist (I like the pile of ties idea!) **ML**

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June 22-25, 2016

Put it on your calendars, the Daylight Express is already at full throttle and is promising to be a blow-out event of **Super** Regional proportions. Watch this space for info on all of the clinics, tours, layouts and more. *ML*



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Lessons learned from a lifetime of trains

Part Two

Text and photos by Blake Bogs



Kent and Barry Bogs at the layout

Welcome back to the second article about planning for the future, featuring Kent Morris's G scale layout, *The Colorado Clear Creek*. In the first installment, I covered tips for planning your layout and tips for building bench work. In this article, I will cover tips to enhance your layout scenery. Once you get your track plan and layout bench work ready for track, what is the next step?

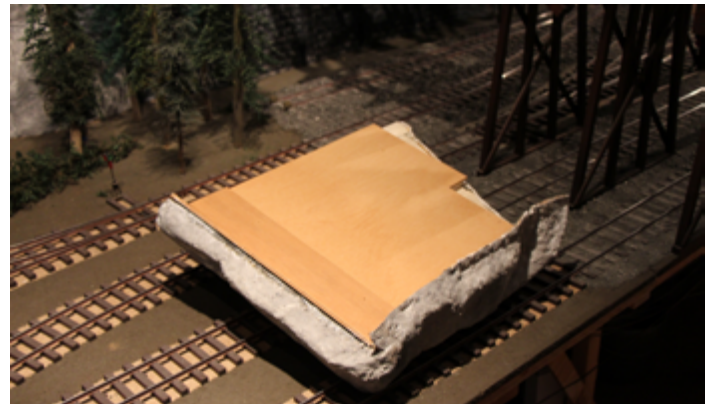
You have two choices, you can simply lay track down or you can apply a sound buffer first. A sound buffer can be made of foam, cork, or homosote. I, myself, like using homosote because you can buy it in 4x8 sheets and use it wherever you need it. I think it does a better job than cork, but that is just my opinion. Once you lay your sound buffer (or just decide you want to layout your track), I recommend drawing out lines with a pencil on your wood or sound buffer to know where to place your track. This helps if you are using flex track, marking where you want your turnouts, as well as where you want to place your various structures, and will prepare you to lay track.

The Marker Lamp

When you put down your track, what do you use as an adhesive? I've heard of many ways such as hot glue, gorilla glue, Elmer's glue, track nails, and others. One thought you normally don't have when you are laying track is, "Will I be able to save this track when I rip out my layout?" I have learned the best way is to pin down the track using Peco track nails.

The next step is ballasting your track. There are several types of ballasts available. I like using Arizona Rock Company Products. You can get Arizona Rock many places. I get mine at KMJ Model Trains in Houston. To glue down ballasts, use a 50% water and 50% glue substance. This will allow you to potentially save your track if you decide to rip out your layout.

While at Kent's, we had the dilemma of how do to pull up the track without destroying it. Kent suggested using water to loosen the ballasts. Through this, I have learned that spraying a whole lot of water on the track will allow the glue/ballast to ease up and allow your track to pull up without breaking even one tie. Although



it sounds easy, it's not! You have to wait several minutes before attempting to pull up the track. Once the ballast is somewhat loose, take a paint scrapper or a crowbar and go underneath the ballast and track. This will do damage to your homosote, but you will eventually throw that away. Just be very careful when you do this; be cautious to avoid any possible injuries.

The next step after laying the ballast is scenery. First, what kind of backdrop do you want? Do you want a mountain scene, field scene, or another scene? You have two ultimate options. You can either paint a background or glue a paper print from Walthers on the wall. I like painting on the wall. It is very easy to take off in the end because you can simply paint over it. The paper prints from Walthers are nice, but you run the risk of having glue marks on your background.

Next consider your scenery. If you want moun-

tain scenes, you can consider three options. You can use plaster, Bragdon Enterprises Geodesic Foam, or just cut foam and cover with Woodland Scenics plaster cloth. I like plaster, but evidently it adds a lot of weight to your layout. If your layout is modular, the layout will be harder to move around due to the weight.

I have not used Bragdon Enterprises Geodesic Foam, but Kent did on his layout. It looked okay and was much lighter than plaster. I believe Bragdon uses bubble wrap in their product (see photo). Finally, your last option is to just cut your own foam. You can cut your own scenes with foam then place the plaster cloth on it. Again, I have never used this method, but I have seen some amazing things.

Once plastering is finished, take tube acrylic paints and put some in a spray bottle. Then add water to the spray bottle. Shake up the bottle until it looks nice





and mixed up. Then spray the color onto the mountains until you find your desired shade. If you don't like the shade, add a little more paint to the bottle and shake it up.

Once you finish plastering and coloring, you then get to add in tree foliage. I like Bachmann's trees if you buy the trees commercially. However, there are plenty of methods to make your own trees. If you don't know any, contact your local LSR Director and he can point you in the right direction. There have been thousands of clinics on tree making. If you can't find a past clinic on trees, you aren't looking hard enough! These trees can be placed anywhere on your layout, but **DO NOT STAPLE YOUR TREES INTO THE WALL!** It is a pain to pull the trees out of the wall. I pulled out between 500-1000 trees from the wall on Kent's layout. It looks good, but it's not worth the trouble later on. Plus, when you finish pulling the trees out, there are holes. Instead, paint the trees on your walls. Our good friend Bob Ross can show you how to paint trees and make them look realistic. Just Search Bob Ross on Youtube and you will find an endless amount of videos.

Lastly, **KEEP YOUR BOXES!** I have heard it before where people will throw away or sell the boxes from their locomotives and freight cars. I have heard that locomotives are worth somewhere around 40% more when they are sold with their boxes. Additionally, keep your receipts from your purchases, and make a roster. Receipts might

be from a hobby shop or eBay, but it is crucial that you know what you paid for your freight cars and locomotives. A roster is quite helpful because it lists everything you have and what you paid for it. My roster at home lists the part number, road number, price I paid for it, DCC information, and the last lubrication date. Forbid something happen to you, the roster can be the best source of information for a loved one to know what you have.

A friend of mine recently passed away about a month before I wrote this article. His wife didn't know where to start, what trains he had, or what he paid for any of his trains. The only help she had was from a modeling friend that she has. If you take the time and make a list, it could be the difference between your family having a \$100 or \$1000 for some items.

This article has a lot of disparate information combined, and I hope there are some helpful tips. Taking down a layout is not an easy task, but it taught me a lot about building a layout that I didn't know. In the next installment, I will take a closer look at Kent's track plan and how he approached operation. **ML**

Expanding a “Starter Layout” into a Mid-sized “Empire”

Text and photos by Ken Towery



I have always enjoyed a quality train layout that the owner has put time and effort into, especially the large, beautifully scened ones that make you think you're seeing real life, only in miniature.

This fascination goes all the way back to when I was a young child, making all kinds of excuses to go to the nearby hobby store because they had a great train layout that allowed me to imagine the locales being depicted as real. In retrospect, it was probably only an 8x4 foot layout, but to my small stature, and vivid imagination, it seemed like it could encompass the entire store. It made me want to build a layout—someday—but of course







I didn't know how, didn't know where to start, and was certain that I didn't have the ability to do it.

At the encouragement of my wife—which means this is all her fault—I finally started building that elusive layout about 30 years after that first hobby store encounter. It was modest—an 8x5 foot structure connected to another 8x4 foot section, making an “L” shape, and except for a few buildings which needed painting and detailing, after two years it was mostly complete. The process of learning how to build the layout came from model railroading books, videos, and my fortuitous decision to join the NMRA, where I found the most important of resources: experienced human knowledge and guidance.

Now the only “problem” was that my layout was no longer satisfying my railroading needs. I had gained knowledge on how to build better structures, lay more reliable track, and design more realistic scenery. I had been introduced to the enjoyment of operations, and realized that it was an imperative to bring this to my own layout. And as well, I realized that to add operations and incorporate these new skills, I needed a functional freight yard, staging, and many more towns and industries to service, plus other factors that I might not be considering. However, any expansion would have to keep the

main town (Deeburg) that was in the center of the 8x5 section because I was very happy with how it had turned out. The streets and neighborhoods that I had built fit the quality standards that I wanted to display in a layout, and I didn't want to lose those elements.

Fortunately, as fate would have it, the current layout only occupied a very small footprint in a 20x24 foot game room above the garage, which meant I had space available to expand the “starter layout” into the “empire” that my overactive imagination had previously only dreamed about. And there was adequate space with which to design outward from Deeburg, thus preserving Main Street and the residential neighborhood I liked so much.

Over the course of many months, I set down with pencil and graph paper to design an expansion that would include all (or at least most) of the elements that I wanted: a sizable freight yard, a multi-track staging area, industrial elements that interested me (especially cattle, coal, and grain), and areas where the mainline would be traveling through interesting scenery and rural settings, yet still keeping the main town of Deeburg.

After several drafts, I finally came up with a track plan that I was happy with, and in July of 2013, construction on the expansion started with the help



of friend Gert “Jim” (Speed) Muller and his radial saw (a much-needed tool I was lacking). Thanks, Jim!

The “non-city” scenery-related areas around Deeburg were demolished and some modifications to the existing bench work were made to fit the planned expansion, while on the opposite side of the room bench work was begun to house the staging yard that would be present under the main yard.

Within a few months, the bench work expanded outward, a peninsula was built between Deeburg (on one side of the room) and the Wilder Street Yard (on the opposite side of the room), and a helix was constructed to allow transition from the yard to “hidden” staging below. Several months later I finally finished the bench work that connected one side of the room with the other, and was able to start laying track. Wiring feeders from the track to the main bus wires as I went, I completed all track work (except for the engine facility) in mid-2014, finally able to run trains all the way around the layout and onto all sidings and spurs. That was a momentous day!

Further progress on the appearance of the layout has seemed slow as I’ve been jumping between structure building, DCC decoder installations, and other wiring projects that, while essential, don’t necessarily make for interesting viewing when the relatives come over to visit. But I do know that progress of some kind is being made almost daily, since even something as mundane as installing couplers on a freight car has a direct bearing on the layout as a whole, even though it might be minuscule.

I have enjoyed expanding the layout immensely, and even though some of the bench work assembly was hard work, some of the track work had to be slightly modified to accommodate new ideas, and the amount of wiring required was often an overwhelming, tedious process, I never regretted turning my “starter layout” into a mid-sized layout that I could be proud of and feel happy to share with others.

The layout—far from complete—may never actually be that “empire” that I had always thought elusive, but soon I can start scenicing certain areas (as soon as I scratch-build a few bridges!), and at least now I can think about hosting operating sessions, something I never thought possible when I seriously took the plunge into this great hobby in 2010.

Oh, and wouldn’t you know it. Recently I’ve been thinking about ways to expand it even more! Now where did I put that graph paper? **ML**

Taming a Western Cattle Operation in N-Scale T-Track

Part One

Text and photos by B.J. d'Orsay Just inside the 62-



Just inside the 62-mm Kato track at the ends of the module, and on the inside track, I used a Peco medium electro-frog turnout at each end for the siding. There was just enough room for four cattle cars to fit comfortably on the siding, without seeming crowded.

What goes with a box full of over 250 N-Scale cows and a railroad? Why, a cattle loading siding of course! And I just happened to have a 4x module with a siding ready to go.

Actually, this module has been in the planning stages for a couple of years and it finally floated up to the top of the list. So last week, I got it down from the shelf, along with all of the buildings and fences I had previously started.

And by way of a disclaimer, I model just about everything free-lance. While I try to create reasonably realistic models, everything I do originates in my mind (yes, I know, a scary proposition). Sadly, I probably do not do as much research before I build as I should. So if I have totally missed the mark on the actual design of the pens and loading ramps, forgive me. They look good to me, and I have fun with my modeling.

The module is a 4x module, 14-inches deep and has six top-leveling feet. It is constructed from 1/4-inch Baltic birch plywood with glue and nail construction, following the standard construction methods found at t-trak.org and t-trakhandbook.com. These sites are generally regarded as the authoritative sites for everything concerning T-Trak.

Since I began modeling in T-Trak 6 years ago, several module manufacturers have come into existence. I am familiar with t-kits.com, out of Austin Texas. They produce a highly precise kit for a reasonable price, for those without woodworking tools or skills. There are other manufacturers, but I am not familiar with them. A google search will get you to their web sites.

The module's track work is an experiment of sorts, for me at any rate. The Aussies, who are VERY active in T-Trak, often use Peco brand track and turn-



Running trains on this new arrangement has proven to be smooth and reliable

outs everywhere except at the module interfaces. I had been wanting to try this, especially as I had a bunch of Peco Turnouts and flex track left over from years ago. I also like Peco turnouts much more than Kato turnouts. They seem to be more reliable and cause fewer derailments.

Since both Peco code-55 and Kato track are actually code-80 in height, it was a simple matter to connect the two brands of track using Peco rail joiners. There is a very slight height difference, probably about 1/32 mm, which a needle file took care of with no problem.

Another problem that I discovered at this stage is that Midwest brand cork roadbed for use under the Peco flex track and turnouts is slightly thinner than that required to mate up with the Kato track. So under the cork roadbed, I put down a layer of 1/32 inch basswood which was the perfect thickness. I still need to add ballast along the side of the Kato Uni-track to match the ballast of the flex track.

Just inside the 62-mm Kato track at the ends of the module, and on the inside track, I used a Peco medium electro-frog turnout at each end for the siding. There was just enough room for four cattle cars to fit comfortably on the siding, without seeming crowded.

Running trains over this track arrangement has proven to be very smooth and reliable.

The loading ramps, sheds and some of the loading pens are from a kit, the Quality Meat Stock

Yard structure kit from N-Scale Architect. The only problem with the kit as delivered is the spacing of the loading ramps. As you can see in the manufacturer's photograph above, the ramps are not spaced far enough apart for 40-foot stock cars. So I kit-bashed the supplied fencing to space the loading ramps appropriately so that four 40-ft stock cars could be loaded simultaneously.

And since everything is bigger in Texas, I wanted MUCH more pen space to hold the 250+ cows I had accumulated for the project. I had to scratch build additional fencing using basswood strip wood. I used 0.0416 x 0.0416 for the posts and scale 4 x 12 for the rails. It's a bit larger than the fencing provided with the kit, but as close as I had on hand. I spaced the posts about 10-ft apart, which





is about the same as the fencing from the kit. And since a large portion of this fence will be toward the back of the module or partially hidden with brush and cows, I think it will look okay.

At the workbench, I assembled ten 11-inch sections (the length of the 4 x 12 fence rails out of the package) using ordinary white glue to make sure I'd have plenty. Once the glue dried, I stained all fencing, both from the kit, and the scratch built sections, with mahogany wood stain from the local hardware store. It turned out a very dark brown.

Once applied to the module, I will weather it to a more appropriately weathered-wood gray using washes and chinks (more about this in part 2 of this series). I tend to do a lot of my weathering of details and structures after they have been attached to a module.

To me, it seems like this helps them better blend in to the final scene. Also, a little stray scattered acrylic powders help weather the ground around things. Weathering the ground to get rid of the too consistent look of freshly applied ground cover really enhances the realism.

While all this was going on, I ballasted the two mainline tracks (Peco code 55 flex) using Kato ballast to blend in with Kato Uni-Trak used on other modules and at the interfaces of this module. For the siding, I used Woodland Scenics Fine Buff bal-

last. Partly because I had a bag on hand, and partly to depict a much older less maintained siding. I followed the methods used by Cody Grivno from Model Railroader Magazine, and am pleased with the results.

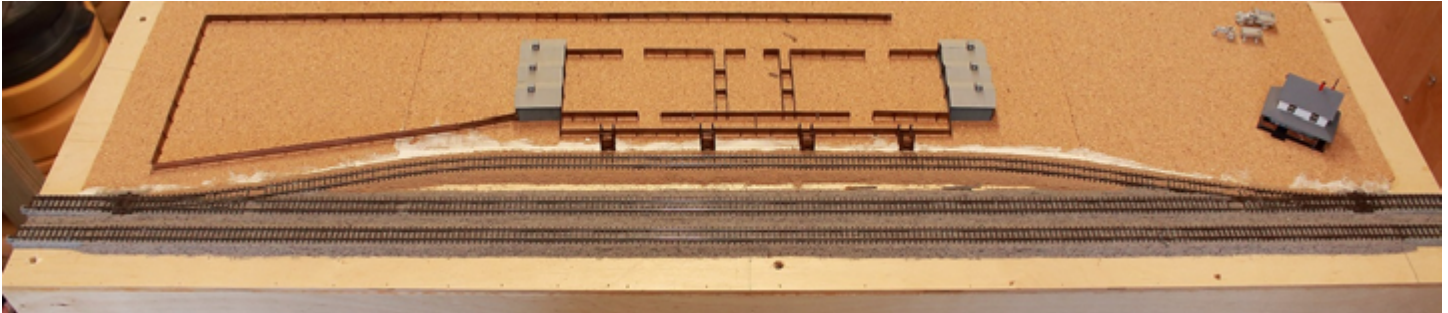
And that's where things sat for about a year as other things (mostly life, foot surgery, job and a new dog) took precedence.

So now, as of this June, I am back on the project and have begun by gluing down the sheds and the fencing. My favorite glue for this is Walther's Goo. It is a rubber based contact adhesive and once it sets up, it is very strong, and I have not had any





From left to right are: GHQ-54005, GHQ-54006 and GHQ-53013



problems with it drying out with age and releasing. It sticks to everything!

The loading ramps section was the first to get glued down. I placed stock cars on the track, and got the loading ramps up close to the cars before gluing them in place. Everything else was placed off of this section of fencing. The left-hand side of the module will be nearly all cattle pens. The right hand side will contain smaller pens and the manager's farm house and space for the equipment, windmill, etc.

I went to my stash of extra buildings and found a ready-built Bachmann Farm House, still in the original box. It would need lots of paint and weathering to make it look more realistic, especially the chimneys, which were the most luscious pink you can imagine. They were the first to get a coat of red paint. Next were the white porch posts and railings. They got a thin brown paint which helped them to look aged. The roof and sides will be liberally weathered. I'll show before and after photos in part 2 of this series.

As for the equipment, I purchased some GHQ pewter kits of a tractor, a cart to pull behind it, and a dump truck. I've been looking for a back hoe or

something similar, but haven't found anything yet.

Assembly of the vehicles is complete as I write this article. My plans are to paint them like new and then add lots of aging and rust, typical of a low-budget operation, and equipment that has sat out in the weather for 20 or 30 years.

So that's where I am as of this writing. My cows are tired of a cramped dark box and yearn to stretch out in a spacious stock yard. Just don't tell them where're they're headed as soon as the train arrives.

In Part 2, I'll continue (finish? who knows!) tracking the progress on this module. **ML**

PORTLAND DAYLIGHT EXPRESS

NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION



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The Rise and Fall of the Chinook Southern Railroad

Text and photos by Lee Bangma

Or probably more accurately:

***The
Fall
and Rise ...***



Vintage photo

I started out with the typical Lionel train set at age five. At age fourteen I converted to HO scale, because it was more lifelike and the smaller size gave more space for realistic railroading. The Chinook Southern name was chosen in the mid-sixties and has continued to be the name since then. Over the years there have been several attempted versions, most of which never got close to completion.

In 1996, a move to a new house meant breaking it into sections and storage for a year. A year later it moved into the new house and was reassembled, with modifications to fit the new space. In retrospect, I should have demolished it and started from scratch, as compromises had to be made, and a lot of it was disassembled and redone anyway. However, all the track had been hand-laid and I didn't want to undo all the hard work and start over.

Things were progressing slowly until word came that the NMRA National convention would be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 2012. I decided to get as much done as possible before the convention and it seemed to work out well. The railroad was about 90% finished when convention time arrived. That week we operated trains on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for a total of over 30 hours.

During that time we were visited by people from coast to coast of the United States, Canada, Great Britain (U.K.) and Switzerland. It was great fun meeting all these different model railroaders from all over the world. If you ever have the chance, go to conventions and open your own railroad if possible for a convention in your area. It is well worth it.



Traveling section

In the late seventies a version was started in Michigan with some scenery included. Shortly thereafter a move to Texas meant the railroad was demolished and for most of the eighties, with no real space for a layout, the railroad was limited to an area eighteen inches deep by six feet long on top of a piece of furniture.

This section had both standard and three foot narrow gauge trackage used as an interchange area between the two. When we moved back to Michigan in 1990, that section came along and was incorporated into the new layout.

While preparing for the convention, the CSRR was visited by committee members to evaluate it for inclusion in the layout tours. Although back in the 1960's and in the 1980's I had entered some models in regional contests and had gotten some merit awards, I had done nothing else in working toward Master Model Railroader status in the NMRA's Achievement Program. When they visited, they immediately stated I would qualify for the Scenery award and wanted to know what other certificates I had already gotten. The answer, of course, was none. But, it started me thinking about it, and in



An overall view showing Chinook yard top right and Athenia below it,

September of 2013, I had the railroad evaluated for the Scenery, Civil Engineering, and Electrical Engineering certificates. Since I had hand-laid most of the trackage, including crossovers, switches, and a narrow/dual gauge conversion turnout, and the railroad was all wired up and working, the hardest work was in completing the application and required forms. If you have any interest in the achievement program, which you should if you've been in model railroading and the NMRA for any length of time, you should start by looking at your present railroad and what you've accomplished on it to see what qualifies and what more you need to do. There are members of your NMRA region and division who would be willing to help you along if you contact them.

In November and December of 2013 the CSRR was completely demolished, although the equipment, buildings, etc. were saved, in anticipation of a move back to Texas. We completed that move at the end of April, 2014, and settled into a house in McKinney, where the room formerly known as the media room has been re-purposed as "the train room" and the start of the new Chinook Southern RR.

The CSRR is a railroad set in south-west Colorado roughly in the 1950's although, being a freelance road, there are some deviations and anachronisms. A few newer autos can be found, and some scenes appear to be more from the late 1800's than the 1950's. The RR was built as a point-to-loop plan, with Chinook yard on the uppermost level, with part of the yard dual-gauged.

At Chinook the Poudre Valley three foot narrow gauge splits off. The CSRR then passes through the town of Jugtown Mountain, and down grade to Friesen Flats, past Dutch Hill to the town of Schooley's Mountain. From there it goes through Fairplay to the lower deck areas of Columbine, Phantom cove, and Athenia where it also services the Stockton branch and turns on the loop around Athenia city to start the return up the hill to Chinook yard.

All motive power is smaller steam engines, and most cars are thirty to forty foot long except for a few that are fifty feet long. Control is by N.C.E. DCC with both wireless and tethered throttles. The program developed by the JMRI group has been used for operations and car forwarding.



Overview of double deck showing town of Chinook on upper deck, center, town of Jugtown Mountain to the left, lower deck shows Stockton branch on the right, Phantom Cove center, and Columbine to the left.



Closer view showing Stockton branch.

Typically, trains originate in Chinook yard and proceed south to Athenia. Most trains are local or peddler freights, although occasionally a special train will be run.

There are also routine passenger trains on the schedule to handle passenger traffic, since the CSRR is located in the mountains and roads are not always easily transversed. Motive power is usually Bachmann 2-10-0 decapods and 4-4-0 Americans, and occasionally 2-8-0 Consolidations at present. Larger engines are occasionally run, and the hope is to eventually put some older brass imports back into operation, although they need to be reworked and converted to DCC. Cars are from a



Closer view of Phantom Cove



View showing the transition area between the double decks and the single deck area.

variety of manufacturers, some are over fifty actual years old, and most are wooden or earlier metal forty footers to fit the era being modeled.



This scene shows the area from the other side after the double deck area



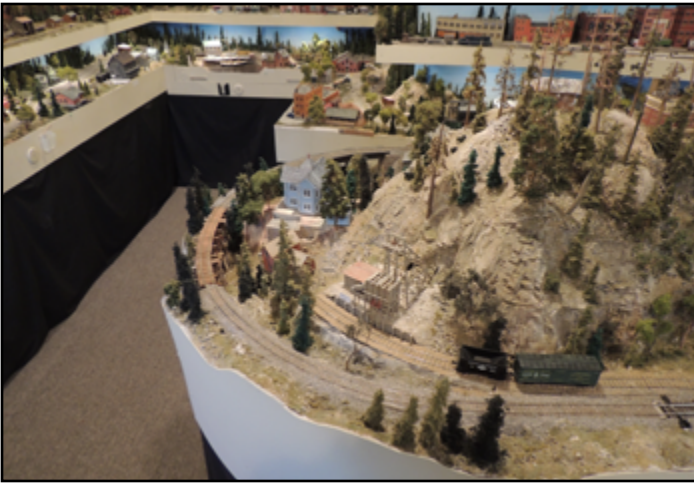
This scene shows engine 1883, a Bachmann 2-10-0, going uphill towards Jugtown Mountain, after leaving Dutch Hill, while engine 2497, an Athearn 2-8-2 heads downgrade through Schooley's Mountain/Fairplay toward Columbine.



Another overview, showing Schooley's Mountain on the right, the original eighteen inch by six foot module, and Friesen Flats on the left.



The old town of Fairplay is visible in this scene, where the town-folk still act and look like they're from the 1800's. It's just an old mountain town, lost in time.



Dutch Hill, showing the Dutch Hill mine in the foreground, and other, previously seen areas such as Chinook and Phantom Cove in the background.



The other side of Dutch Hill, showing the Olde Hundred coal mine.



There were rock climbers on old Squaw Peak.



A mother and child were shopping for their needed supplies at the Mill Creek market in Fairplay, while the old guys played checkers next door.

Buildings are also from a variety of manufacturers, mostly kit built, but also some are completely scratch-built. There are buildings made of wood, plastic, metal, card stock, and plaster.

There were many small scenes built into the scenery. In fact, we have used a sheet of "things to find", to stimulate more careful looking at the railroad, and a better appreciation of what had been accomplished.

The new CSRR is currently under construction as a point-to-point with yards at both ends, on two decks with a helix used to move from upper to lower deck. Hopefully, it will be operable by the LSR 2016 convention to be held in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Here are a few photos of the progress so far. Most of the track is in and



The crew has a conversation as the Phantom lies dockside awaiting it's cargo. The boat was built from a Model Shipways kit, with added details, a replica of the 1880's pilot ship, Phantom.



There is a lot of traffic in busy downtown Athenia, where even the dogs leave their calling card.



The hill above Stockton branch is a favorite spot for camping.



The tentative town of Columbine on the lower level.



Another shot of Columbine showing one of the industries serviced by the CSRR.



Shots of two towns (or areas) on the upper deck, names undetermined.



Switching the industries in tentative Friesen Flats.

operating on the lower level, along with basic scenery. On the upper level, things are also progressing.

However, the scenery base is being built prior to laying track, although the track base is being put in first. And I generally tend to lay the ballast down last, after everything is done and operating satisfactorily, so no ballast has been laid yet.

So, as you can see, although there are no ashes to rise from, just like the Phoenix, the Chinook Southern is rising again! **ML**



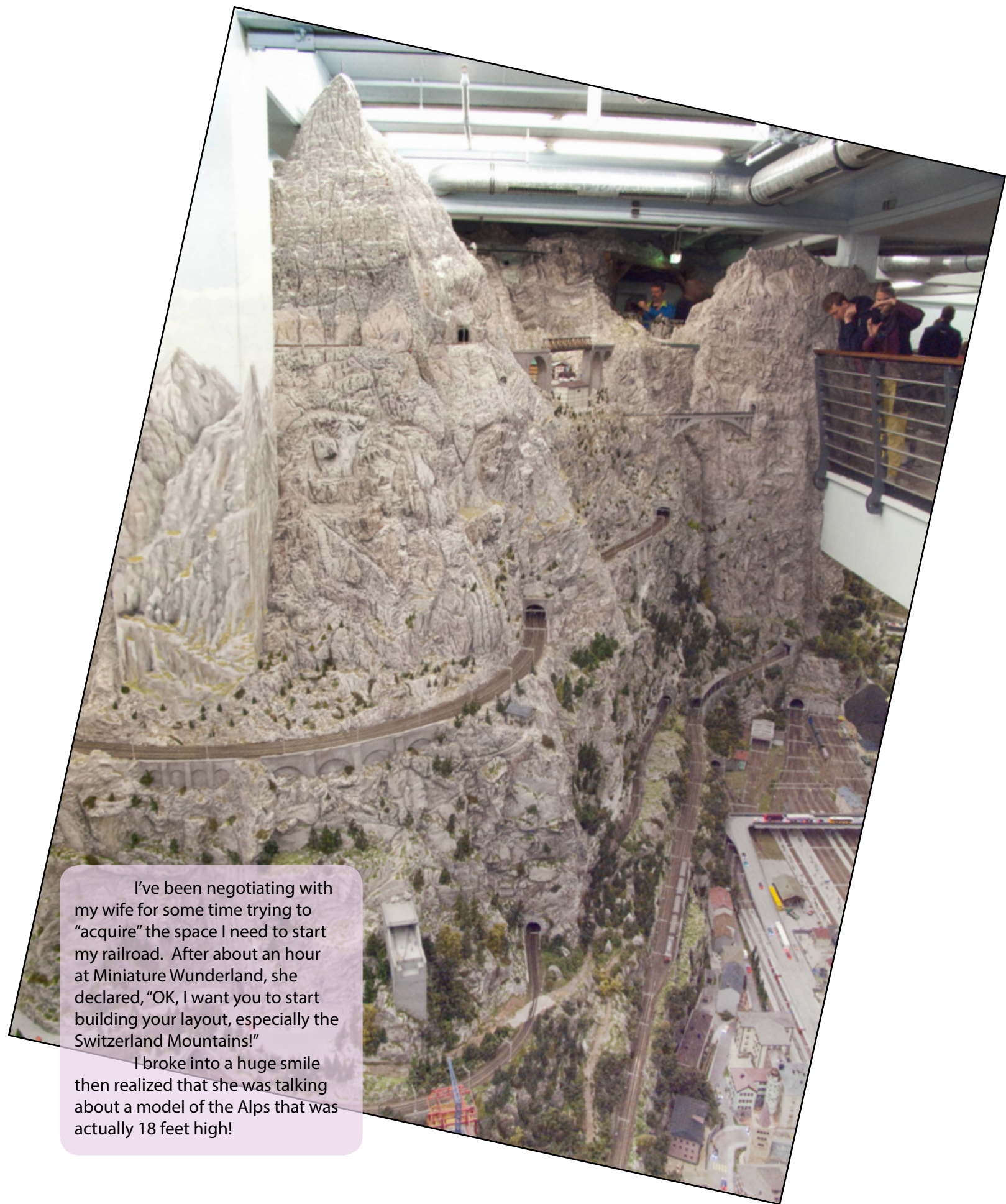
Hamburg's

A Day at Miniature Wunderland

By Roy Stockard

Even though visiting this beautiful model of world railroads was an afterthought added on to a Baltic Sea cruise last May, it should have been the main event.

*Miniature
Wunderland*



I've been negotiating with my wife for some time trying to "acquire" the space I need to start my railroad. After about an hour at Miniature Wunderland, she declared, "OK, I want you to start building your layout, especially the Switzerland Mountains!"

I broke into a huge smile then realized that she was talking about a model of the Alps that was actually 18 feet high!



I immediately started re-visualizing my flat land layout that would have fit nicely within the confines of an 8 foot ceiling. The words "Forced perspective" and "selective compression" came to mind along with two more words, "Don't Panic"!!

Some of the things I saw there which IGNITED my imagination were the sunrise/sunset scenario i.e. fluorescent/LED lighting, the Faller car system, and the use of hidden staging areas to vary train and truck schedules.



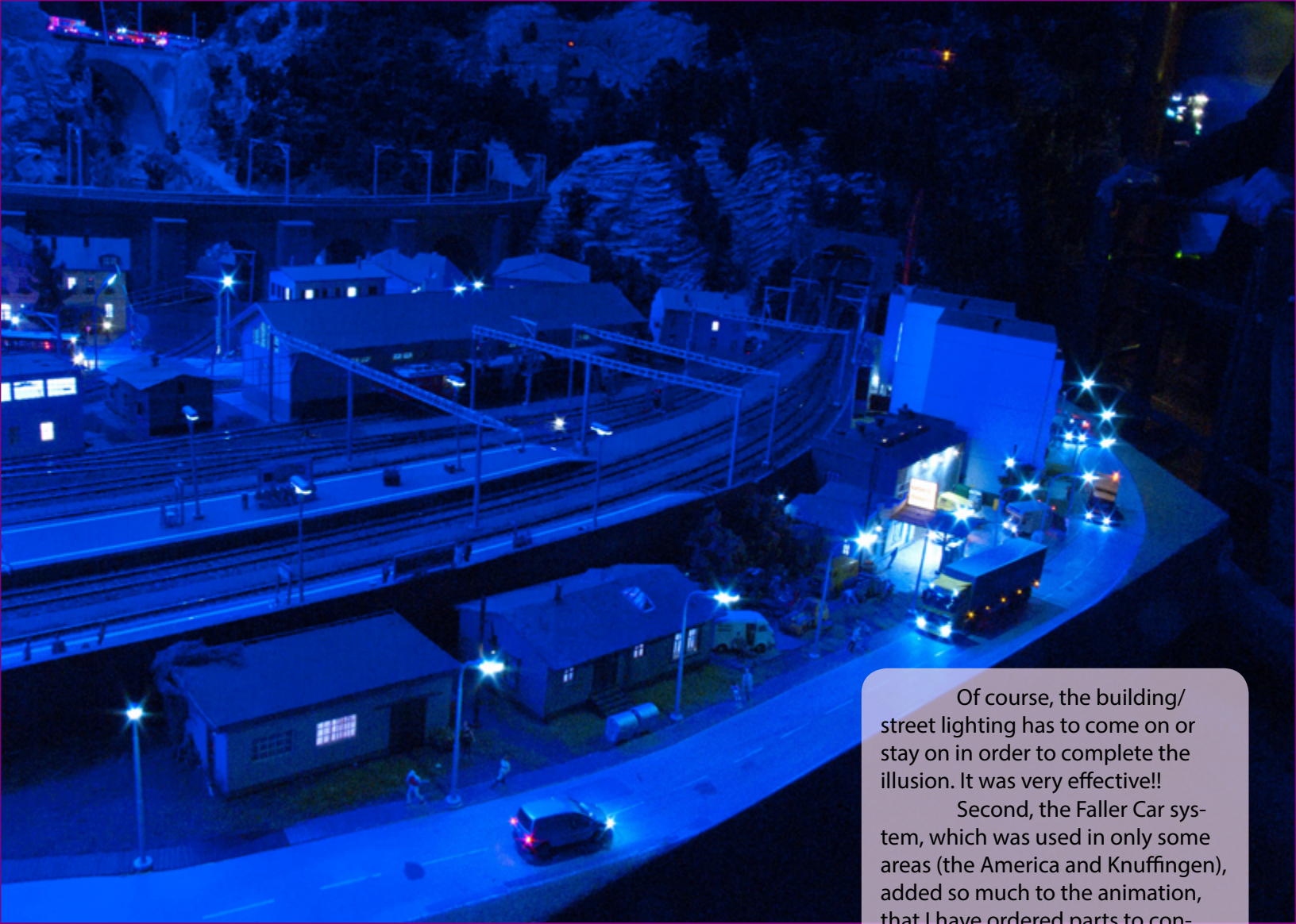


First, the sunrise/sunset captivated my thinking because of the simplicity (maybe in appearance only) of using dimable fluorescent ceiling lighting. Only three colors, red, blue and daylight white was used every fifteen minutes to achieve the effect.



These colors were dimmed and brightened gradually in a sequence which simulated night coming and going. Here is a sequence of the lighting effect.





Of course, the building/ street lighting has to come on or stay on in order to complete the illusion. It was very effective!!

Second, the Faller Car system, which was used in only some areas (the America and Knuffingen), added so much to the animation, that I have ordered parts to convert some Mini Metal trucks that were previously going to be static displays only.

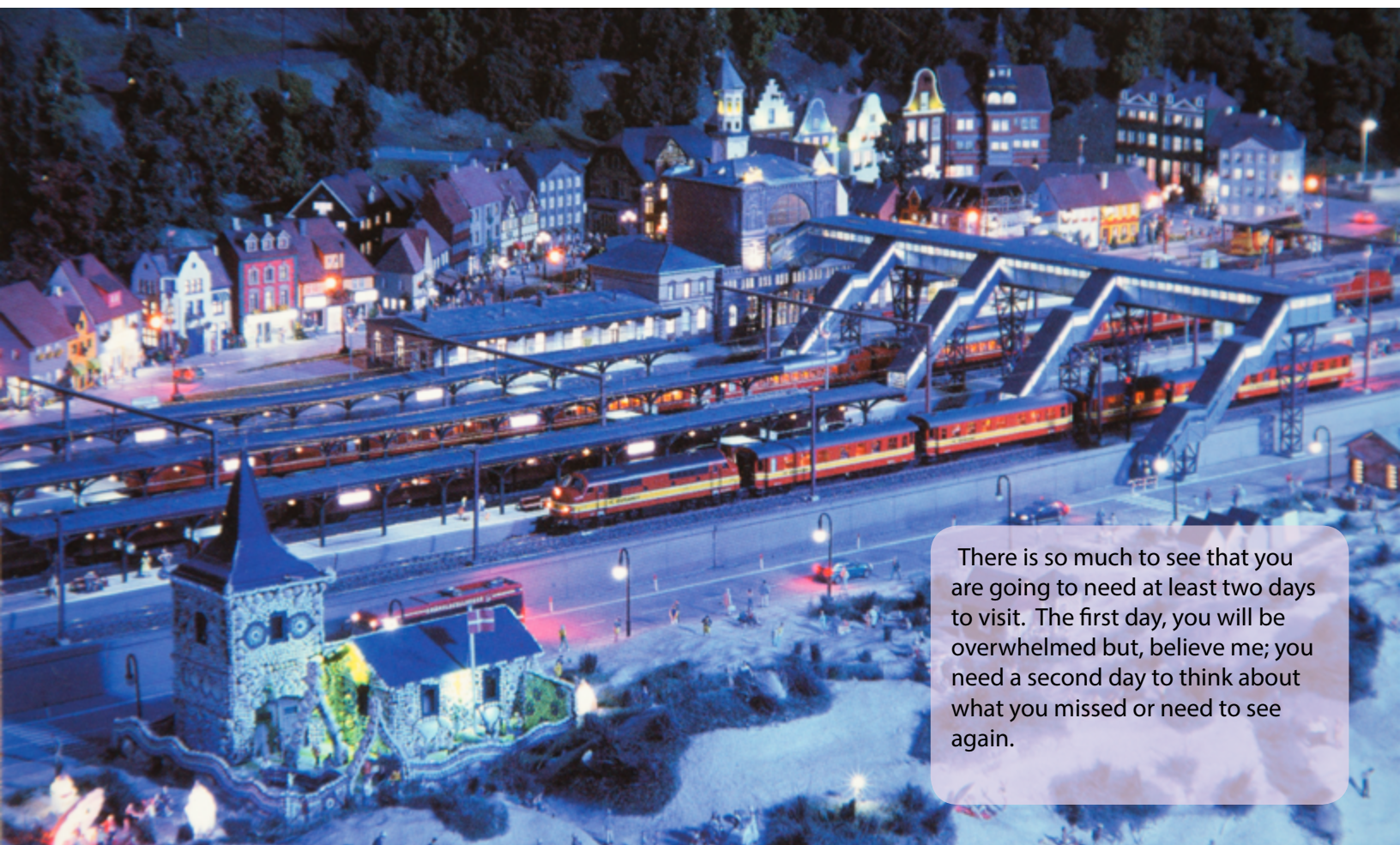
Knuffingen animated traffic centers on fire trucks with European style sirens with blue and red LED emergency lights. The US area depicting Las Vegas because of its light intensive casino models, features mainly highway trucks – 18 wheelers.

While standing at one scene, I watched a UP diesel back a string of flat cars up to a loading ramp. The train sat there for about a minute and from different directions four box trucks appeared and drove onto the flat cars and the train pulled out and joined the main track. Here is a short video of the 18 wheeler traffic: https://youtu.be/c6vg_TG_DKI

Lastly, hidden track has been in my plan for some time but MW uses it extensively.

While standing for over thirty minutes at one vantage point where I had the view of two yards, a station, four flyover tracks and several tunnels, I never saw the same train come through the scene. On the behind the scenes tour, which I highly recommend you buy, I saw the extensive yard areas used to "hold" the trains for long periods of time.





There is so much to see that you are going to need at least two days to visit. The first day, you will be overwhelmed but, believe me; you need a second day to think about what you missed or need to see again.

This would be a great trip for a group of model railroaders, say 6 to 8 guys/gals. Split up the first day then compare notes that evening and at breakfast then head out to see what others saw and you missed. There is just too much for one person to take it all in one visit.

Call me if you plan to go and need another to tag along. **ML**



Video snack

Videos by Blake Bogs

Blake Bogs has kindly made available some videos to accompany articles that have previously appeared in the **ML** on the Wimberley, Blanco and Southern as well as his review of sound decoders. Plus there is a bonus video of Barry Bogs' G scale Colorado & Southern. -rt



Wimberley, Blanco and Southern <http://youtu.be/vTUUgrMqf4>



Sound Decoders http://youtu.be/V_Fn8Tsd5QM

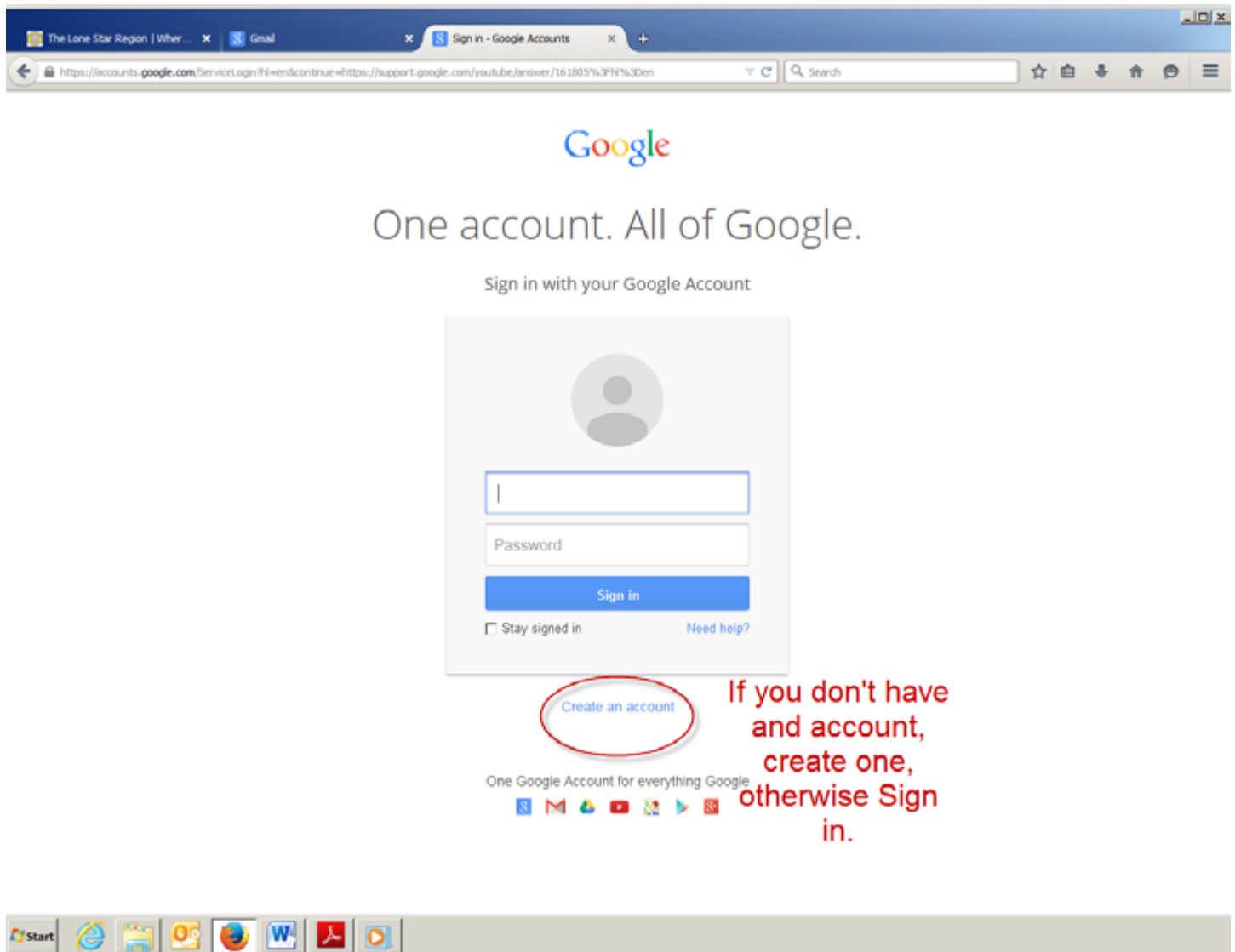


Barry Bogs' Colorado Southern http://youtu.be/0W2w33a_Kls

Blogging a Video

by Jeff Palmer

Back in August of 2013, I blogged a shot on the lonestarregion.com web site by Casey and Cody Akin of the 4018 Big Boy being moved from Fair Park to Frisco's Museum of the American Railroad. He was quick to point out that the video was posted to YouTube. This means you need to have a YouTube account or more specifically, a Gmail account. Go the www.gmail.com and create an account:



Once you have a Gmail account, the following video will show you how to upload your video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7iUiftbKU>

The reason for uploading you video to YouTube is, videos tend to be very large, several gigabytes (GB) in size, and the LSR has limited storage capabilities.

Once the video is posted, the process to add it to a blog is simple. The most obvious step is to log on using your LSR login:

The screenshot displays the homepage of 'The Marker Lamp' website. At the top is a banner image of a model train. Below it, the page is divided into three main sections: Navigation, a central content area, and a Blog Block. The Navigation menu on the left includes links for the Main Menu, Constitution & By-Laws, Contest Forms, Rules, and Info, Lone Star Region Officers, Marker Lamp, Membership Info, Divisions (1-8), Clinics, and Convention Info. The central content area features a large article titled 'Summer Marker Lamp' published by Jeff on Sun, 06/18/2013. The article's main image is a cover of 'The Marker Lamp' magazine, Volume 59, Number 3, Summer 2013. The cover highlights articles such as 'Create Signs and Decals Using the Internet', 'All Aboard! The Membership Express', and 'Convention Wrap Ups: Reports and Photos'. A 'User login' block is located in the lower-left corner of the main content area, featuring fields for 'Username' and 'Password', a 'Request new password' link, and a 'Log in' button. A red circle highlights the login fields, and a red arrow points from a text box on the right to the 'Log in' button. The text box contains the text 'Click here or here to login'. The Blog Block on the right lists recent blog posts: 'Staying On Track Vol 19 No 09 - September 2013 Issue', 'Floquill Color Chart Cross Reference', and 'The Big Boy move to MAR - Phase 1'. The footer of the page includes a 'Secure Search' bar and a 'McAfee' logo.

Figure 1 Logging in

The "User Login" block in the lower left-hand corner of Figure 1, is the typical login block:

- 1) Enter your user ID
- 2) Enter your password
- 3) Click the "Log in" button

If you use the “Login” at the top of the Home Page. This will take you into a Log in screen shown in Figure 2. Log in as described above.

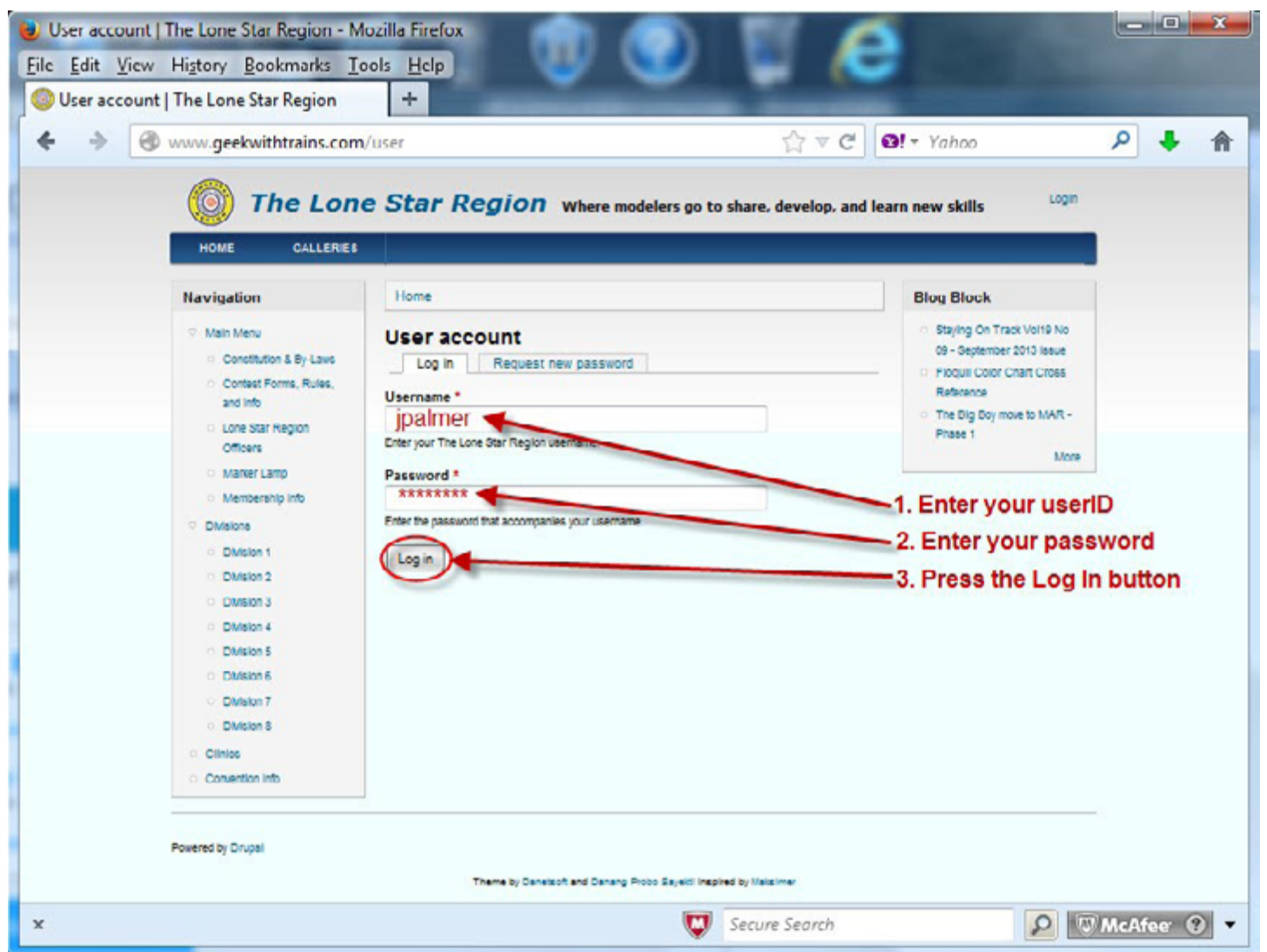


Figure 2 Log in

From here, select the “Add content” menu option at the bottom of the Navigation Menu



Navigation

▼ Main Menu

- Constitution & By-Laws
- Contest Forms, Rules, and Info
- Lone Star Region Officers
- Marker Lamp
- Membership Info

▼ Divisions

- Division 1
- Division 2
- Division 3
- Division 4
- Division 5
- Division 6
- Division 7
- Division 8

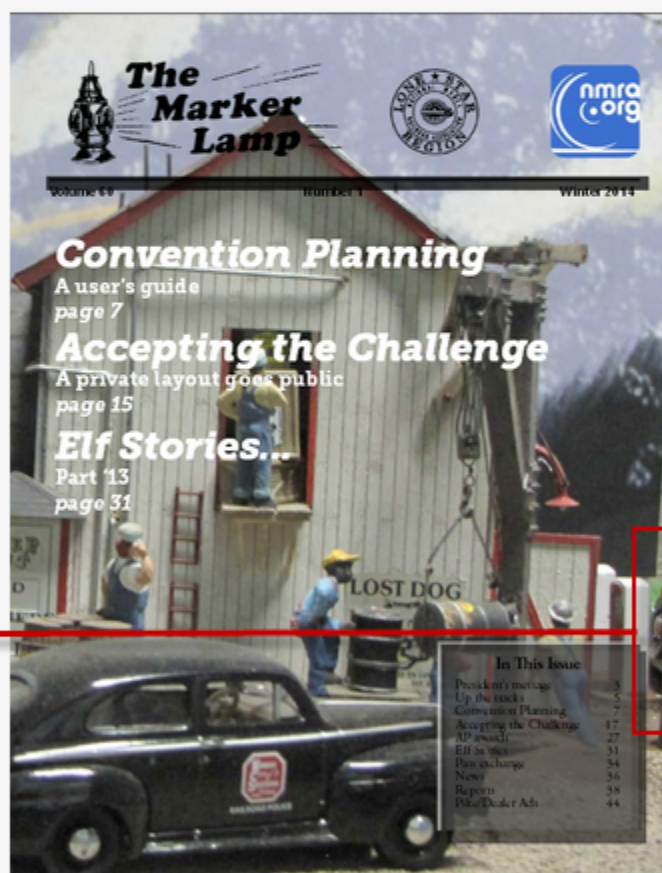
○ Clinics

○ Convention Info

○ Add content

Winter 2014 Marker Lamp

published by Jeff on Sun, 02/16/2014 - 09:48



**IT's here!!!! The Winter 2014 Marker Lamp!
Look for Riley's call for HELP!!!**

Tags: Winter 2014 Marker Lamp

[Read more](#)

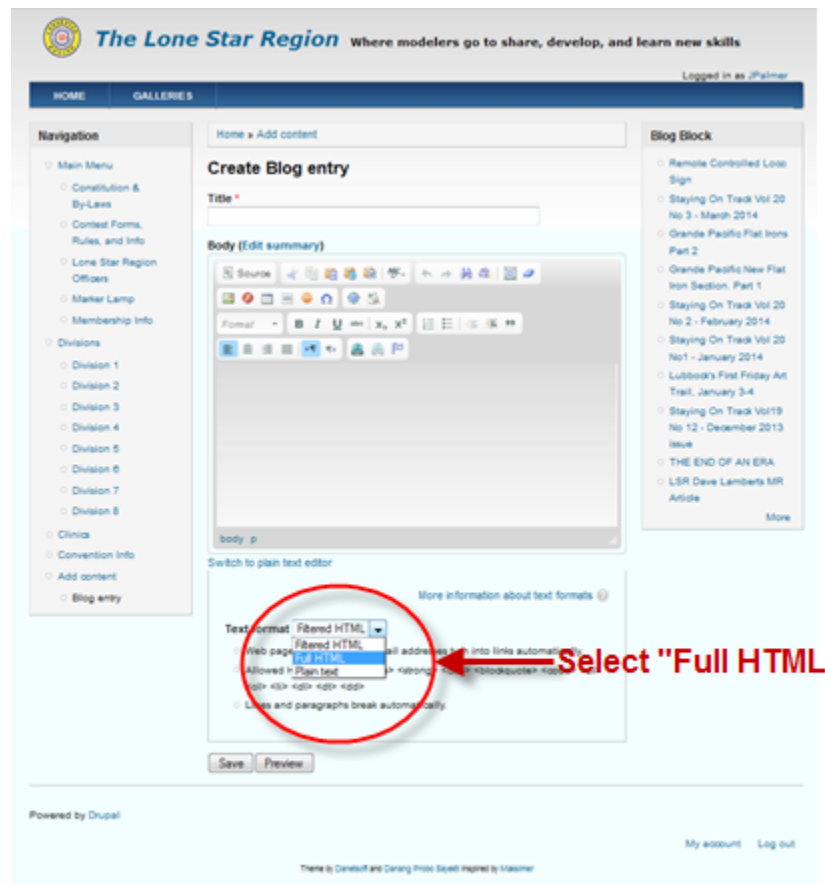
Blog Block

- Remote Controlled Loco Sign
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 3 - March 2014
- Grande Pacific Flat Irons Part 2
- Grande Pacific New Flat Iron Section, Part 1
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 2 - February 2014
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No1 - January 2014
- Lubbock's First Friday Art Trail, January 3-4
- Staying On Track Vol19 No 12 - December 2013 Issue
- THE END OF AN ERA
- LSR Dave Lamberts MR Article

[More](#)

After Login, "Add Content" appears at the bottom of the Navigation Menu Click

When you select “Add content”, the “Create Blog entry” screen will appear. Go to “Text Format” and select “Full HTML”.



When “Full HTML” is selected, the IFrame button is added to the menu bar.

HOME GALLERIES

Navigation

- Main Menu
 - Constitution & By-Laws
 - Contest Forms, Rules, and Info
 - Lone Star Region Officers
 - Marker Lamp
 - Membership Info
- Divisions
 - Division 1
 - Division 2
 - Division 3
 - Division 4
 - Division 5
 - Division 6
 - Division 7
 - Division 8
- Clinics
- Convention Info
- Add content
 - Blog entry

Home » Add content

Create Blog entry

Title *

Body (Edit summary)

Source

IFrame Button

Format Font Size

body p

Switch to plain text editor

Full HTML Seleted

More information about text formats ?

Text format Full HTML

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

Save Preview

Blog Block

- Remote Controlled Lock Sign
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 3 - March 2014
- Grande Pacific Flat Iron Part 2
- Grande Pacific New Flat Iron Section. Part 1
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 2 - February 2014
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No1 - January 2014
- Lubbock's First Friday Art Trail, January 3-4
- Staying On Track Vol19 No 12 - December 2013 issue
- THE END OF AN ERA
- LSR Dave Lamberts MR Article

More

Press the IFrame button to get the following screen:

summary)

The screenshot shows a web editor interface. At the top, there's a 'Blog' header and a text input field. Below that, a 'summary)' section is visible. The main editing area contains a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for text formatting, alignment, and insertion. A red box labeled 'IFRAME' is placed within the editor. An 'IFrame Properties' dialog box is open in the center, featuring two tabs: 'General' and 'Advanced'. The 'General' tab is active, showing fields for 'URL', 'Width', 'Height', 'Alignment' (set to '<not set>'), 'Enable scrollbars' (unchecked), 'Show frame border' (unchecked), 'Name', 'Advisory Title', and 'Long Description URL'. At the bottom of the dialog are 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons. On the left side of the editor, there's a sidebar with links like 'in text editor', 'Full HTML', and 'More information about text fc'. At the bottom of the editor, there are 'Preview' and 'Delete' buttons.

At this point, we need to turn our attention to YouTube and the video. For this example, We're going to use the Big Boy video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwt28MYKaI8>.

This URL will bring up the following screen:

Moving Big Boy #4018

Part 1 Fair Park to Irving



Big Boy 4018 move part 1 Fair Park to Irving Texas



mesaman3000 · 42 videos

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342

20,323

106 2



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About

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Add to



Published on Aug 19, 2013

This is the first part of the Big Boy number 4018 being moved from her former home in Fair Park, Dallas, Texas to Frisco. This first part shows the engine, with consist used for brakes, leaving Fair Park,

Show more

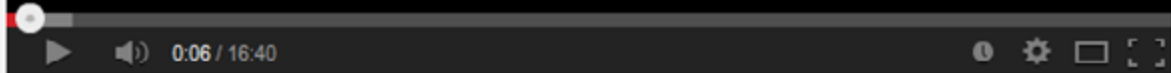
Select SHARE

ALL COMMENTS (70)

As the figure shows above, select the SHARE option. That will bring up this screen:

Moving Big Boy #4018

Part 1 Fair Park to Irving



Big Boy 4018 move part 1 Fair Park to Irving Texas



mesaman3000 · 42 videos



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106 2

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Step 1: Select EMBED

```
<iframe width="560" height="315" src="//www.youtube.com/
embed/Vwt28MYKa18?rel=0" frameborder="0"
allowfullscreen></iframe>
```

Step 3:
COPY

Video size:

560 x 315

☐ Show suggested videos when the video finishes

☐ Enable privacy-enhanced mode [?]

☐ Use old embed code [?]

Step 2: Uncheck
any checked boxes

Select the EMBED tab, and clear any check boxes as shown above. Copy the information between the quotes on the SRC portion of the generated statement. From here we switch back to the "IFrame Properties" screen and fill in the blanks.

Home » Test Blog

Title ▾

Test Blog

Body (Edit summary)

body p

Switch to plain text editor

Text format: Full HTML ▾

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically

Menu settings
Not in menu

Revision information
No revision

URL path settings
Automatic alias

Authoring information
By jPalmer on 2014-03-30 14:09:18 -0500

Publishing options
Published, Promoted to front page

Save Preview Delete

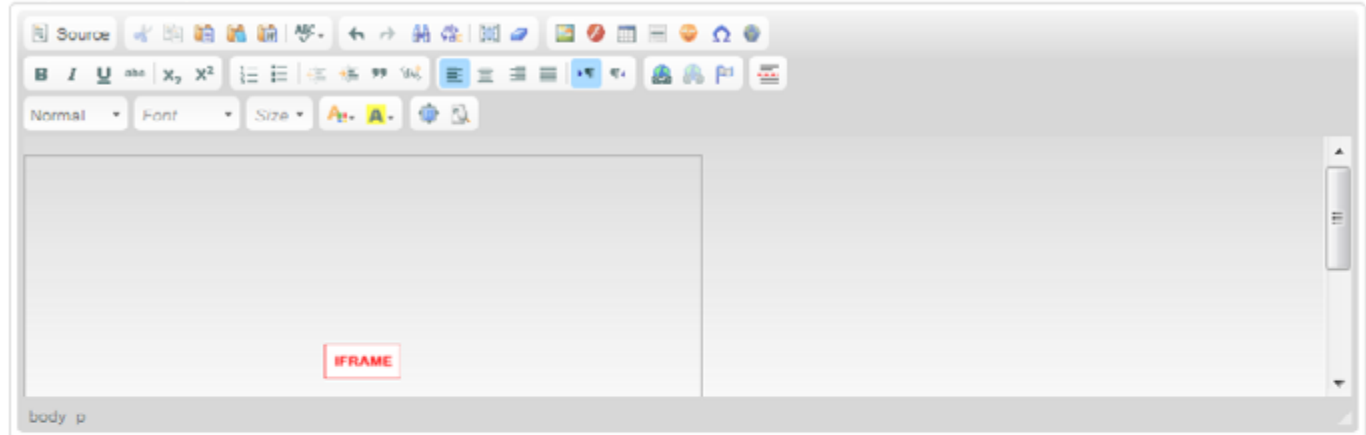
Note the URL information; it was copied directly from the YouTube IFRAME. You also want to control the width; if the width goes above 520 pixels, part of the video will be blocked by the “Blog Block”. Click OK. That will return you to a screen that looks like this:

Home » Test Blog

Title ▼

Test Blog

Body (Edit summary)



A rich text editor interface. The toolbar includes icons for source code, undo, redo, bold, italic, underline, strikethrough, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert image, insert video, insert audio, insert iframe, insert table, insert code, and a help icon. Below the toolbar are dropdown menus for font face, font size, and text color. The main editing area is a large text box containing the word "IFRAME" in red. A vertical scrollbar is on the right side of the text box.

Switch to plain text editor

Text format Full HTML ▼

[More information about text formats ?](#)

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

Menu settings

Not in menu

☐ Provide a menu link

Revision information

No revision

URL path settings

Automatic alias

Authoring information

By JPalmer on 2014-03-30 14:09:18 -0500

Publishing options

Published, Promoted to front page

Save

Preview

Delete

Click the PREVIEW button at the bottom of the panel. It should provide you with a screen that looks like:

Preview trimmed version

Test Blog

Submitted by [JPalmer](#) on Sun, 03/30/2014 - 14:09



[Read more](#) [JPalmer's blog](#)

Preview full version

Submitted by [JPalmer](#) on Sun, 03/30/2014 - 14:09



If all is well, select SAVE, also at the bottom of the panel:

Title ♥

[Test Blog](#)

Body (Edit summary)

The screenshot shows a web browser window with a rich text editor. The toolbar includes icons for source code, undo, redo, bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert image, insert video, insert iframe, and insert table. The main content area is empty, and a red box labeled 'IFRAME' is visible in the bottom right corner.

[Switch to plain text editor](#)Text format Full HTML

[More information about text formats](#) ?

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.

Menu settings

Not in menu

☐ Provide a menu link

Revision information

No revision

URL path settings

Automatic alias

Authoring information

By JPalmer on 2014-03-30 14:09:18
-0500

Publishing options

Published, Promoted to front page

Save

Preview

Delete

When you select **SAVE**, you will see the following:



Navigation

- ▼ Main Menu
 - Constitution & By-Laws
 - Contest Forms, Rules, and Info
 - Lone Star Region Officers
 - Marker Lamp
 - Membership Info
- ▼ Divisions
 - Division 1
 - Division 2
 - Division 3
 - Division 4
 - Division 5
 - Division 6
 - Division 7
 - Division 8
- Clinics
- Convention Info
- Add content

[Home » Blogs » JPalmer's blog](#)

✓ Blog entry *Test Blog* has been updated.

Test Blog

[View](#)[Edit](#)

published by JPalmer on Sun, 03/30/2014 - 14:09



JPalmer's blog

Blog Block

- **Test Blog**
- Remote Controlled Loco Sign
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 3 - March 2014
- Grande Pacific Flat Irons Part 2
- Grande Pacific New Flat Iron Section: Part 1
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No 2 - February 2014
- Staying On Track Vol 20 No1 - January 2014
- Lubbock's First Friday Art Trail, January 3-4
- Staying On Track Vol19 No 12 - December 2013 issue
- THE END OF AN ERA

[More](#)

Notice that the message at the top of the screen that notifies you that the blog has been updated and also notice that the blog has been added to the Blog Block for all to view. You did it! **ML**

...RRduino...

by Speed

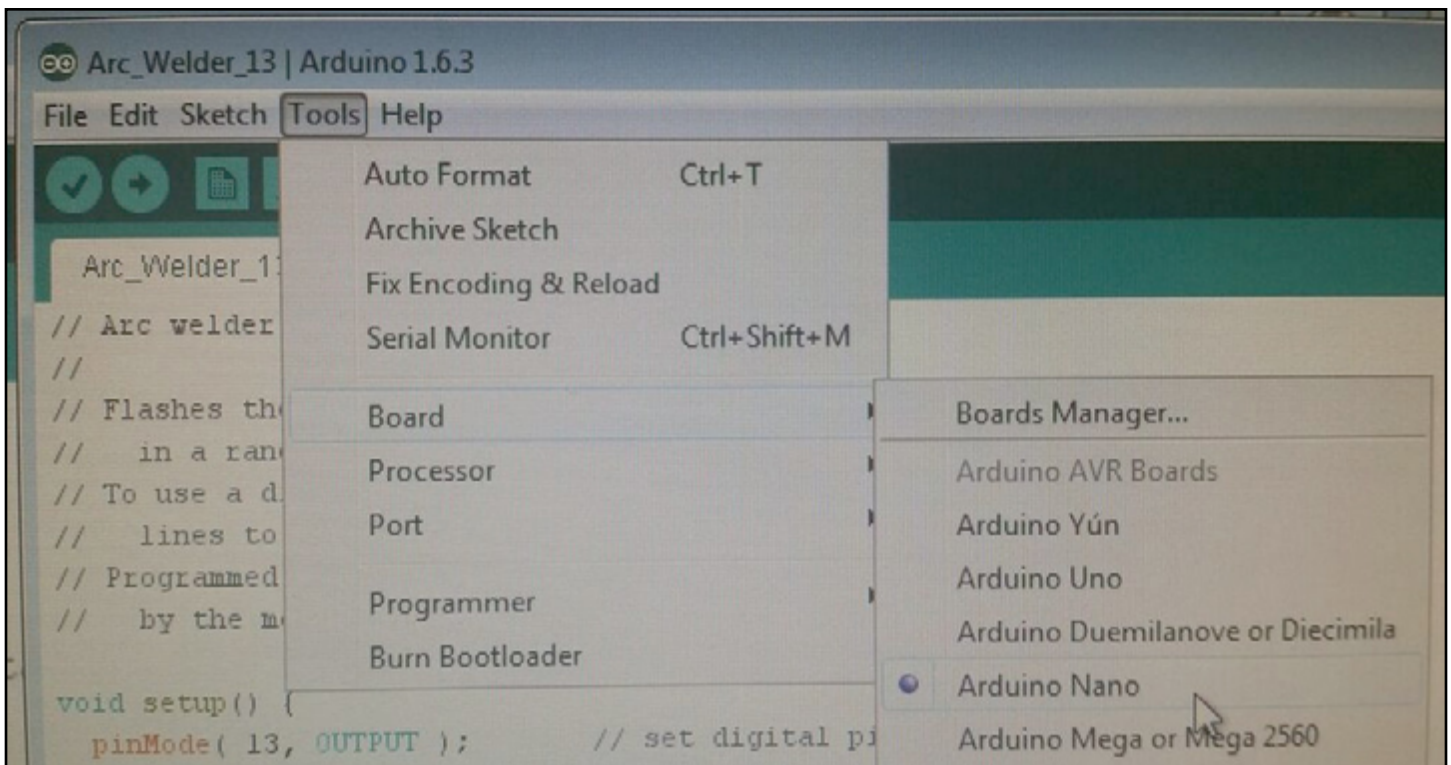


An Arduino is a small computing platform, that can add animation, sensing and/or the control of almost any actuator or motor at a very low cost (< \$15) to your layout, module and/or diorama.

Back in the day you needed to know an electrical engineer or buy a whole kit that comes with the pc-board already populated to add some animation to your layout. Now, you can do that all yourself, without needing to become an expert in electrical or software (even though you will be moving in that direction along the way, sorry)!

I built an Arduino based grade crossing with the lights flashing when a train shows up in the block AND it had the bell ringing through a speaker too. I did not install the servo motors to bring the gates down, since there aren't any of those gates in Namibia (my African origin and layout), but the Arduino was already set up to do it. All I have to do, is plug the servo motors in.





So back to the beginning, a couple of Italian gentlemen came up with this computing platform, somewhere around 2005, named after an early Italian King, Arduin of Ivrea, and created an environment world wide, where everyone in the robotic, embedded and electronic world, as well as serious hobbyists knows what an Arduino is and can do, and so should you!

The software or IDE platform (integrated development environment) is free to download and will always open up with the two required functions, `setup()` and `loop()`, already shown. The software will verify the code you wrote (called a Sketch) and after picking the correct serial port, board and possibly the processor on the board, would also upload the compiled code into the Arduino board.

All you had to do is plug it into the USB port and maybe install a device driver the first time. All these steps are described in detail at <https://www.arduino.cc/en/Guide/HomePage>.

The software, as installed, comes with a ton of examples, just take look at File->Examples. You do not need anything to install the software on either Windows, Mac or Linux, since it comes with its own Java virtual machine and all the tools to compile and upload the code for Atmel's ATmega328 and other micro controllers. So just download and install! <https://www.arduino.cc/en/Main/Software>

Hardware

Each one of the Arduino platforms, Uno, Due, Leonardo, Yun, Mini, Micro, Mega, or Nano, to name a few, comes with their own “fixed” footprint, so that you can buy add on boards to plug into it. These are called Shields, covered in a future article. So if you have bought an Uno and need a connection to your Ethernet Network, you would buy an Ethernet Shield for the Uno.

Most Arduinos containing the ATmega328 controller has 14 digital I/O pins (input/output) of which 6 can be used to produce a PWM signal (pulse-width modulation) and 6 more pins capable of reading in analog voltage levels. Imagine a small 7 story building with two LEDs on each floor turning on and off at different times, all based on a light sensitive resistor connected to an analog pin, so it all starts when you turn the light in the room down. And then there are 5 more street lights in front of the building with a random flicker, connected to the last 5 pins. 19 x LEDs, 1 x sensor, 1 x Nano, all for less than \$10.

To start off, I would suggest buying either an Uno (3 x 2.1”) or a Nano (1.8 x 0.7”), because these come with a USB connector on-board and you don’t need an extra gadget to program the Arduino. But, you do need to know that the USB connector and chip to convert takes up space, so if you want some-

thing smaller, like the brain in a self driving motor car, that there are smaller options too.

The Uno came first and has the most Shields, but it does not fit in HO Engines or rolling stock, but the Nano does! A future article will describe Roy's new automated Greyhound buses.

Software

You also don't need to be an expert in software, either C or C++. Most of us has put a model railroad 'kit' together, or followed instructions to program a DCC decoder, so view Arduino code as just that, a list of instructions for the micro-controller to execute.

Lets take a look at a piece of code that only needs an Arduino board by itself, no other hardware needed, since there is already an LED soldered on the board connected to pin 13:

All you need to know at first, is that there are two functions required, `setup()`, that runs only one time when the board turns on, and then `loop()`, that keeps running from start to end, over and over, until you power the board down. To follow along with the code, make sure to read the comments to the right of the `//` on each line.

The code shown below, only needs to be copied into your Arduino Sketch, just like all the other public examples you might find on the Internet.

To understand the code, here are a few notes about every command used:

- Everything to the right of a `//` is a comment, which gets removed by the pre-processor before it gets to the compiler. So we just type notes and explain things behind the `//`. You might also encounter a comment between a `/*` and `*/`, like:
`/* This is a comment
over more than 1 line */`
- `{` and `}` puts code in “blocks” so you can group them and say, do this 2 times, or keep doing it until the counter is bigger than 10.
- And “void” in front of the “`setup()`” and “`loop()`” functions, only indicates that those two functions will not send a piece of data back when they end.
- `pinMode(pin, direction);` sets the direction of the pin, is it an input or an output.
- `random(min, max);` picks a number between the min and max values you provide (including the first one).
- `digitalWrite(pin, HIGH/LOW);` will make the pin HIGH or LOW (5V or 0V), as you command. In Roy’s English, ON or OFF.
- `delay(milliseconds);` waste time with the processor until the provided milliseconds have passed, so `delay(1000);` would wait 1 second
- Every command ends with a semicolon: “`;`”
- and the last one, `while(j > 0)`, will continue to run the code inside the block after it, as long as the variable `j`, holding a number, is bigger than zero, so you need to change `i` somewhere in your code block, if you ever want to get out, and make sure `i` is bigger than zero before you start, if you ever want to get in!

```

// Arc welder routine for an Arduino board

// Flashes the on-board LED attached to digital pin 13
//   in a random pattern similar to an arc welder
// To use a different pin change the pinMode and digitalWrite
//   lines to the pin you wish to use
// Programmed by Rick Jones and released for public use
//   by the model railroading community
// Adding random wait after welding a random number of cycles
//   by Gert Muller

void setup() {
  pinMode( 13, OUTPUT );      // set digital pin 13 as an output,
                              //   the on-board LED is connected to it
} // setup

void loop() {
  int j = random( 0, 100 );   // welding for a random number of cycles
                              //   so i is now a random number between
                              //   -1 and 100, see
                              // https://www.arduino.cc/en/reference/random

  while ( j > 0 ) {
    digitalWrite( 13, HIGH ); // LED is on...
    delay( random( 0, 100 ) ); // ...for a random number of
                              //   milliseconds between -1 and 100

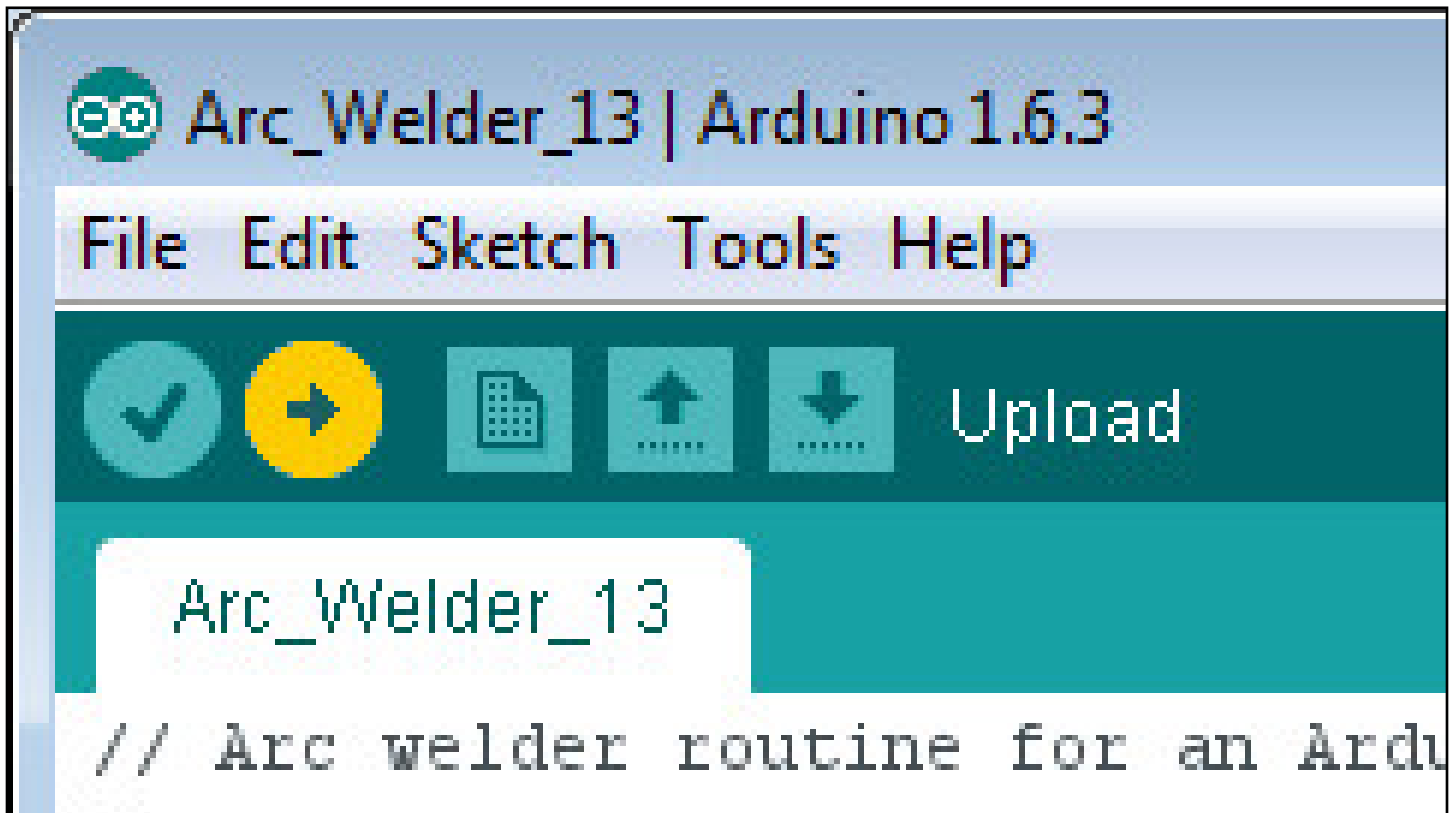
    digitalWrite( 13, LOW );  // LED is then turned off...
    delay( random( 0, 100 ) ); // ...for another randomly chosen
                              //   interval between -1 and 100 milliseconds

    j--;                      // reduce j by one, same as j = j - 1;
  } // while i

  j = random( 0, 8000 );      // now pick a new random number of milliseconds
  delay( j );                 // and stay off, you need to move to another spot to weld

} // loop

```

So, you start the Arduino software, paste the code shown above into it, and from the Tools menu, pick your specific board and COM port after plugging the Arduino in, and then click the "Upload" button.

The first time it will spend some time compiling the whole framework, since there are more things behind the scenes than just `setup()` and `loop()`. Then some lights on the Arduino board will start flashing as it programs your chip and then, as if from nowhere, you would see one of the red LEDs start welding.

Great! you have successfully programmed your first Arduino! Next time we will move a servo... *ML*

NMRA Layout Directory

Work is underway on a new program to create a member Layout Directory. This will replace the visitation feature of the old NMRA Pike Registry Program.

The Layout Directory will be an on-line system that allows NMRA members (only) to:

- Identify the layouts of participating NMRA members by location, scale, gauge, era, prototype and area modeled, etc.
- Review the particular features of the layouts
- Contact layout owners to arrange visits or exchange common-interest information

Layout owner participation will be voluntary and built-in security features will protect privacy.

A working group has been formed to develop the Directory and input is needed from NMRA members.

One of the first tasks of the group is to survey layout owners from the old Pike Registry and visitors to their layouts to determine:

- What visitation aspects worked
- What didn't work
- What features they liked
- What features they didn't like
- Suggestions for the new Layout Directory

The working group also will survey other NMRA members who either own layouts or are interested in visiting layouts to determine what they expect from a directory, what concerns they may have and suggestions in general.

NMRA members are invited to comment by contacting the working group chairman, Bob Chaparro, at chiefbobbb@verizon.net or 951-925-2069.

Members interested in having their layouts included in the Layout Directory also should contact Bob. *ML*

'Round Town with Roy

Text and images by Roy Stockard



The freight has taken the siding and its caboose has cleared the main giving a green signal to the running late "Limited" coming off the mountain. "The Limited" headed by MDAK 2-6-2 is pounding onto the single track through truss bridge just before it joins the double track main.

Big Boy 4015 has a red home signal, just out of sight, and is waiting on the main for the working hard Challenger 3670 to clear the block ahead. Lots of activity is typical on Stan Pirzchalski's MDAK HO railroad.

Photo is by Roy Stockard. HO scale modeling by Stan Pirzchalski, Colleyville, Texas



K-37 #490 crosses Lobato Bridge after leaving Chama with freight consist after a meet at the Chama station with K-28, #473 pulling a passenger train. Jack Walton used Bragdon rock molds to create the mountain, while MMR, Charlie Kirk modeled the bridge. The river and backdrop were painted by Gary Rush. The sky and clouds were from the photographer's collection.

Photo is by Roy Stockard. Sn3 scale modeling by Jack Walton, and MMR Charlie Kirk.

ANNOUNCING!!

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF THE

SQUARE FOOT CONTEST

The 2015 SQUARE FOOT Contest

For 2015, the LSR Model Contest is bringing back one of the most popular Special Contests of the past few years – the Square Foot contest. If you're not familiar with it, here's the deal: Build anything you want in any scale you want... as long as it fits on a 12 inch x 12 inch display. It doesn't matter what it is: on-line or off-line; structure, bridge or whatever – the sky's the limit. Actually, the sky literally is the limit; you can go as tall as you want, just don't let it get outside that square foot!

Your Square Foot entry will be judged in the Display contest category and will be eligible for all the traditional awards up to and including Best in Show. And the entry earning the highest score will receive a plaque as Square Foot Contest winner!

But wait, there's more! If you choose to feature an outhouse in your entry it'll also be eligible for the Square Foot contest at the National Narrow Gauge Convention to be held in Houston, September 2-5, 2015. All the same rules apply as for the LSR's version, except that the primary subject is to be an outhouse.

So put on your brainstorming cap, let your imagination go and start thinking INside the box! This contest'll be fun!

If you have any questions, contact the LSR Contest co-chairs:

Chuck Lind
979-219-3305
chucklind46@gmail.com

Loren Neufeld
713-962-4035
lorenmr@aol.com



Walter John Zahn

January 3, 1935 – May 25, 2015

Pass Exchange

Headed by Walter Zahn

Walter passed on May 25, 2015 as a Life Member of the National Model Railroader Association, financial contributor and leader of the Pass Exchange Program for the Lone Star Region. He built a beautiful N Scale layout and had an open house each year in January.

He honorably served our nation in the Air Force, Civil Air Patrol and the Air Force Reserves. Walter will be missed by family and friends but he lives on in our memories.

The Pass Exchange Program is without a leader now, but in the August 2015 issue of the NMRA magazine on page 7 is an introduction to the Layout Registry. The Layout Registry is intended to serve as a successor to the Pass Exchange.

Achievement Program



Achievement Program

by Duane Richardson, MMR

In talking with National I have confirmed that he processes our submissions on the 28th of each month. If you can get your paperwork to me before then I can get it processed and sent. I was also informed that a PDF scan of the paperwork is acceptable. This is how I have been working with it and it's worked great. This allows me to take submissions almost up to the deadline and still get the paperwork in on time.

If your paperwork is submitted to National prior to the 28th it will get processed on that month's list and you will have your certificate returned in just a few weeks. If we miss the 28th then you will be waiting for another month. I will still take your paperwork via regular mail or hand delivered but a PDF is just fine.

Also, as a reminder, there are 2 forms involved in each category. The Statement of Qualification form (or SoQ) and the Record and Validation. The Record and Validation is really only for you to track that you have completed the requirements. The SoQ is the only form I need to submit to National.

Al always said, "Put the pencil to the paper" and get me your paperwork. If you have any questions or if I can help you in any way please feel free to contact me. My contact information is listed with the officers here in the Marker Lamp and on our website. **ML**

For more information on how to get involved in the Achievement Program, contact:

DUANE RICHARDSON, MMR
1122 Holland Drive, Garland, TX 75040
(972) 495-6375
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Division 3 Achievement Program Award Winners (and some show and tell) *photos and text by Ken Towery*

The April Division 3 meeting was held at the Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Allen, TX, and both the June and July meetings were held at the Sokol Athletic Center in Dallas. Starting with the April meeting, Division 3 members began working on a new "make and take" project to scratchbuild a speeder shed (or storage shed, or tool shed, or whatever the imagination can devise). The projects continued over the May and June meetings. **ML**



During Show & Tell, Tom Browning displays one of the many versions of his West, TX Depot.



Cody Akin explains his (and his brother's) new locomotive scratch-building project. If the finished product is anything like the last locomotive they built, there's a good chance the next "Best in Show" plaque



Yours truly received a Merit Award for building a coaling tower. If I can do it, anyone can.



Roy's ongoing hand-laid HO/HOn3 crossing is finally done. Soon after, Stockard Crossing was installed on Jerry Hoverson's new layout.



The May meeting unfortunately went without awards too, since every was working on their Structures certificate, a scratchbuild clinic by Duane Richardson. Photo by Speed



Photo by Speed



Jerry Wilson received an AP Award for Master Builder - Prototype.



Lee Bangma received his 6th AP Award for Master Builder - Cars.



And Gert "Speed" Muller received his 5th AP Award for Model Railroad Engineer - Civil.



At Show & Tell, Don Winn showed off his scratchbuilt speeder shed.



Not to be outdone, Mike Mackey displayed his excellently detailed and



And Craig Tribuzi showed off the O-Scale lumber company kit he is designing.



Allan Price shows off his excellent 1:24 scale scratchbuilt flat car.



The brothers Akin, Cody and Casey, show off what they've completed so far on their newest scratchbuilt locomotive project. It looks outstanding so far!



Jeff Palmer was kind enough to display several high quality models built by Joseph Thorenson.



Craig's O-scale Westside Lumber Company kit is making progress.



Thomas Stephens describes a flashing grade crossing signal he built with an Arduino microcontroller, in preparation for the clinic in September.



Boyd Patterson may be a former judge, but now his preferred title is "The Tool Guy". The tool in his hand may look like a simple piece of wood, but it's actually a highly versatile, useful accessory for any model railroader, unless you don't mind spilling your bottles of paint.

Minutes of the Lone Star Region Board Meeting

Beaumont, Texas – July 26, 2015

President Steve Barkley called the Annual Board meeting to order at 10:25 AM.

Roll call

All of the officers, directors and committee chairpersons were present except:
Voting Board Members:

Don Kimmell – Jeff Palmer

Non-voting Board Members:

Riley Triggs

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Director-At-Large Art Houston provided a motion and Director-At-Large Jerry Hoverson seconded to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as published the Minutes of the July 26, 2015 Annual Board of Directors meeting published in the 2015 Winter issue of The Marker Lamp - designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 1 passed.

Officers Reports

President Steve Barkley

The President's Report was submitted by email to all Board members and is summarized as follows:

The Lone Star Region faces a number of issues as we progress forward.

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION

The first issue to address is the annual convention. Historically, the annual convention rotated on a four year basis between Houston, San Antonio, Dallas/Fort Worth and one other city. This rotation is failing.

This year should have been Houston's turn. However, many of the NMRA members in the Houston area are heavily involved in the upcoming National Narrow Gauge Convention. So Houston passed on holding the convention in 2015.

They have, however, supported Beaumont both monetarily and personally in holding the 2015 convention.

San Antonio has not held a convention in many years. I understand that they are heavily involved in hosting their annual train show, which makes money.

Round Rock has stepped up as has Lubbock. Their conventions have been fun.

No city other than Beaumont volunteered to host the 2015 convention. As I write this it looks like about 95 members and family members will attend the convention.

As with all past conventions, there will be a wide variety of clinics. Operating sessions will be held on two Beaumont area layouts. Modular layouts will be in operation at the host hotel. It looks like it will be a fun convention.

I've talked with the convention chairs, George Bohn and Dave Cummings. It does look like the Beaumont convention will lose money. My best guess is a loss of about \$2500. This probably represents money that the convention committee will not be able to repay to the LSR and to Division 8 for advances they made to fund the convention.

This is not bad. The LSR is now an IRS 501(c)(3) charitable organization. It is right and proper that we use our funds for educational purposes. Certainly our yearly conventions are educational. Our treasury is solvent. I personally have no objection to the LSR giving financial support to its yearly convention.

Our members learn new modeling techniques. Our leadership develop their skills in this area. Tours give attendees a chance to learn the history of the convention city. Almost every activity at our yearly conventions are educational and that is what our membership wants! As an example, the proposed casino tours were cancelled for lack of interest.

Dallas /Fort Worth have agreed to host the 2016 convention. Mike Mackey and John Garfield have taken on the job of convention co-chairs. They are looking for help from throughout the LSR. If past conventions are any guide, more registrants will come from the Dallas, Fort Worth and Austin areas than from other parts of the LSR.

FUTURE CONVENTIONS

There seems to be developing reluctance to hosting a traditional yearly convention. It is time now for someone to commit to hosting the 2017 convention. Hosting a convention in the traditional format takes time, money and exposes the LSR to additional expense. I would welcome some entity committing to host the 2017 convention.

If not, we may want to consider some alternatives. OpSig, HOOTERS, and the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club have models that we may work from to change the format of our future conventions. There seems to be a trend towards shorter meets.

We may want to consider shorter mini conventions tied in with train shows. This way a shorter convention, perhaps three days or so, could be held at the same time as a train show. Fewer people would be required to host the show. This would be similar to the weekend meets held by HOOTERS and the OpSig special interest groups. Normally these affairs have a host hotel with a special room rate. Breakfasts are included with the room. The host organization does not guarantee attendance. Sometimes a banquet is held but sometimes not. However, the host organization does not guarantee food revenues to the chosen restaurant. There would be no financial risk to the LSR!

The San Jacinto club in Houston combines a train show with a model contest and clinics. Expand this to 3 days and you can add a no host banquet and a guest speaker. Make arrangements with a family oriented

hotel to offer a block of rooms at a special rate. If no one reserves the rooms, then the hotel could release them. Plan to pay for conference and meeting rooms out of registration fees.

We could have two mini conventions per year to coincide with the midyear meeting and with the summer annual meeting. Shorter meets might encourage smaller cities to “host” such meets. Baton Rouge, Amarillo, Texarkana, the Valley, and other locations come to mind. If a city is large enough to host a train show, it should be large enough to host an LSR mini convention.

MEMBERSHIP

Larry Swigert produced an interesting report This should give all of us something to think about.

In 2003 the LSR had 925 members. In 2015 the LSR has 1047 members. This is 12% growth in 12 years. The LSR is doing something right!

We might consider who our target membership really is. Do we want to encourage youth membership? If so, perhaps we could allocate some money to purchase \$10.00 trial memberships for youth at train shows.

If we are looking for older members, we could offer trial memberships to them as well. Just think, \$1,000.00 would purchase 100 trial memberships to introduce many more modelers to the LSR and the NMRA. Perhaps we should try this for one year and see what our rate of return on renewals would be. We could give these out at train shows to those who showed an interest.

Barna is a church organization that studies, among other topics, growing church membership. They make good points that relate directly to model railroading. Who is our target membership? What demographic group might be most interested in becoming a model railroader? How and where do we find them?

What do we in the LSR have to offer a prospective member? A 100% NMRA club offers both trains and socializing. Division meetings do the same. The LSR can and should encourage whatever works to grow the Region and to foster interest in Model Railroading among all age groups.

THE MARKER LAMP

Riley Triggs has done a wonderful job with The Marker Lamp. The articles are great. Color adds so much. We should all be very proud of our magazine!

MODEL RAILROADING IS FUN!

Whether we are model builders, operators, collectors, arm chair modelers, or just enjoy the camaraderie of the hobby, we are model railroaders because it is something we enjoy. Bill McPherson tells me that the original founders of the LSR wanted the organization to be loose and informal. They wanted to discourage bureaucracy Perhaps we should all remember this!

Vice-President Bob Barnett

The Vice-President’s Report was submitted by email to all Board members and is summarized as follows:

It has been a busy time this year around the Houston/Upper Gulf Coast area. We have a Division Director who represents Division 8 so my activities have been in addition to the Division 8 officers and the Convention Committee headed by George Bohn.

In January and February I chaired the Greater Houston Train Show and arranged for the clinics. We had six very good clinics including one on using JMRI for fine tuning locomotives and one on using JMRI for car forwarding, (presented by Paul Bender) and an outstanding tree clinic by Steve Nelson of Austin.

I just finished assembling the clinics for the 2015 LSR Convention to be held in Beaumont (on the eastern end of Division 8). To date we have 17 clinics lined up in 32 time slots. We have arranged clinics on scenery, electronics, prototype industries, the use of digital photography for scenic effects and prototype railroading. We hope the convention attendees will enjoy all of these and take home some knowledge useful in developing their railroads.

I also just put the finishing touches on the clinics (call presentations) for the 2015 Missouri Pacific Historical Society Convention that is being held in Houston October 8 through 10 this year. We are fortunate to have assembled a group of excellent rail historians to present clinics on the MP Texas Subsidiaries: International-Great Northern (I-GN), the St. Louis Brownsville & Mexico (ST.L.B.&M. or the Brownie), Texas & Pacific (T&P) and the Gulf Coast Lines. If you want to learn more about these now long-gone Texas Lines that were gathered into the MP, come to Houston In October.

Then there's the Grand-Daddy-of-them-all: The National Narrow Gauge Convention to be Held in Houston this September. LSR Director Chuck Lind is putting together the clinics for that one. Chuck and several other prominent Gulf Coast Narrow Gaugers are hosting this event of national significance.

Considering that the Santa Fe Technical and Historical Society Convention was held in June in Dallas/Fort Worth, this has indeed been a very busy year for model railroaders and railfans around the state.

We are fortunate that nearly all model railroaders, railfans, and railroad historians are willing to share their knowledge with others. I almost never get a turn down when asking a railroader to put on a clinic, and that is typically due to a prior commitment for family or travel.

There is one more small item we do to further educate the public about railroads. As the current president of the Houston Area Live Steamers, we have just held our fourth Run Day for the year. The first three were held under threat of rain so attendance was down. That caught up with us this past Saturday as the weather cleared and approximately 1800 passengers showed up to ride the Cypress Creek & Southern out at Zube Park. We kept five (and at times six) trains hauling the whole day. We were hot and tired but a good time was had all!

Combine this with the reports from the several Division Directors and I believe model railroading is doing well around the Lone Star Region.

Treasurer Donna Orr

The Treasurer's Report, was submitted by email to the Board members and is summarized as follows:

Our current net worth is \$39,383.67

I have included the updated spread sheet for the fiscal year 2014-2015. And the up dated projected budget for 2015-2016.

Status of the 501C3

We have been granted 501C3 status by the IRS as of January 23, 2015. We have also been granted by the State of Texas franchise tax exemption, sales and use tax, exemption, but not hotel occupancy tax exemption as of January 23, 2015

Since we are a 501C3 public charity by education. We are going to have to keep a log of all our educational activities. I suggest that our Education Chairman be responsible for accumulating the information needed and send that information to the Treasurer and Secretary at least twice a year – for the annual meeting and the Mid-year meeting. Information needed will be the educational activity, where, when, who provided the educational opportunity and the type (clinic, tour, trip, seminar, training session, train shows, etc) any advertisement or brochures to verify the activity. We are can use education on model railroading and railroading. The education chairman can set up a process for gathering that information from the divisions and conventions etc.

The annual audit was conducted on July 26, 2015, by Donna Orr. The audit committee consisted of Dave Cummings, and Nathan Oxhandler. Audit was BOD approved in motion designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 2 - Passed.

Secretary Jeff Palmer

The Secretary's Report, was submitted by email to the Board members and is summarized as follows:

Since the Annual Board Meeting in January, the LSR Secretary has been involved with the LSR, working with Donna Orr to transform the LSR from a 501(c)(7) to a 501(c)(3), which has been accomplished. GREAT JOB DONNA. The secretary continues to work with the LSR President, LSR Treasurer, the Election Committee to re-write the LSR Constitution and By-Laws to accommodate staggered elections. The secretary then worked with the Nomination Chair, Blake Bogs, on the election recently concluded. All LSR Secretary tasks were accomplished.

Since that time, the LSR Constitution and By-Laws have been updated to reflect the changes approved. A call for reports, and new business items for the Annual BOD meeting has gone out and a tentative agenda has been presented.

Advisor Bill McPherson

The Advisor's Report, was submitted by email to the Board members and is summarized as follows:

No Report

Directors Reports

Division 1 Director Chris Atkins reported that Since the January board meeting we have once again started having regular division meetings: one in March and one in May.

In March we met at Michael Ross' home and visited his fantastic O-Scale Appalachian coal railroad.

In May we met at the Handley Center and I put on a clinic using my Cricut cutter to make model railroad structures. I demonstrated cutting the walls of a CB&Q depot I have been working on and made a showed

how to cut vinyl by making a Cotton Belt sticker.

We also had the first 2016 convention-planning meeting at the Handley Center in April. We had a good attendance, and co-chairs John Garfield and Mike Mackey are doing a great job planning a fantastic show in Arlington.

I was asked to do the registration for the 2015 convention in Beaumont and have been receiving forms and forwarding checks to the convention treasurer.

The Division continues to be active in the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs. The big change for this year is that we are going to have a September show in Plano as well as a January show. Both will have clinics, where before, we didn't do clinics at Ft. Worth, so the LSR will continue to promote the hobby thru its educational mission.

The sad part of this, of course, is that we no longer have a Council Train show in Division 1. This was a difficult decision to come to, but ultimately the Council voted to leave Ft. Worth after the city continued to price itself out not only with the Amon Carter venue, but also with \$10 per day parking.

Division 2 Director Rod Fredericks reported: During my third year as the Bayou Division Director I have continued my outreach to model railroaders and clubs in the Bayou Division. Operations remain a major focus in the Baton Rouge/Houma/New Orleans area, and in Lake Charles.

My efforts to get more participation of NMRA/LSR members in events beyond their local sphere has not progressed as well as I had hoped. Last year only four Division 2 members attended the Round Rock convention, and I do not believe that even with this year's convention only just across the state line, any more than four will attend. Which casts a shadow on hopes of the Bayou Division being able to host a convention in the Baton Rouge/New Orleans area, in the near future. It's hard to get volunteers to plan and work on hosting convention that they have never attended. At least that has been my experience every time I bring the idea up with local members.

Nevertheless, I will continue my effort bring Division into the larger world of model railroading. This fall we will be starting a series of clinics in the Baton Rouge area, and hope that might reach out to fresh blood.

Division 3 Director Jerry Hoverson reported that The Trinity River Division monthly meetings have provided numerous educational clinics over the past year.

As mentioned in the mid-year report we've had clinics on

"Weathering without using an airbrush"

"Set up a phone system for operator/dispatcher communications"

"Soldering 101"

"Make-n-take a Resistance Substitution Box"

"A presentation on Logging Railroading"

"A collection of photos as well as of the famous Tehachapi Loop"

"A discussion and demonstration on using a "3D Printer" to make small parts"

"how to install and use a SoundCar decoder"

Since then we signed up a bunch of new members at the Plano Train Show and have been concentrating on bringing these folks up to speed with our now famous "Model Railroading 101" classes. Since this covers

such a large amount of topics it took us 3 months to cover all of it.

Finally we started and completed a make-n-take scratch built speeder shed. We had everyone sign up for their preferred scale and broke the group into 4 skill level categories; beginner, intermediate, advanced, and psycho! (you know the one's that not only do board on board construction but put period specific labels on cans on a shelf or put scale cobwebs in the corners or, well you get the idea). This project actually spanned 4 meetings with the last meeting being devoted to weathering the shed. Next month, everyone is to bring in their sheds and we'll have a popular vote contest and award a prize to the winners in each category. I bet a bunch of them merit in the achievement program.

That's it for this time, keep rolling down the track!

Division 4 Director Peter Kazmir reported that it has been a busy several months since our report for the 2015 winter meeting.

We had two Division Meetings in March and May. Our meetings consist of a clinic, show and tell, DCC minute (describing some aspect of DCC control), social time, deal or duds, and a layout tour. We also have some educational material and displays in a beginner's corner as well as information and displays describing the benefits of NMRA membership and the AP program.

At the March meeting, Kennedy Gauger gave a clinic about using digital cutters to make paint masks and cut styrene. We had some great Show and Tell items and Phil Sharpnack delivered our DCC Minute. After a presentation about his layout, we toured Riley Triggs' Hoboken Shore Railroad (which features battery-powered locomotives – no track wiring!).

At the May meeting, Dick Sowash gave a clinic on building and painting plaster structures, Jerry Wilson led a discussion introducing the NMRA Achievement Program, and we toured David and Sam Nicastro's three layouts, including an open operating session (with instruction for beginners) on David's Denver & Rio Grande Western Moffat Route.

We leave flyers at King's Hobby Shop in Austin and are posting meeting notices and pictures from previous meetings on our web site, <http://centexnmra.org>. Our meetings are usually attended by 30-40 people, including NMRA members and guests (our meetings are free and open to the public).

The Division recently performed a survey of members and other model railroaders in the area, and based on that we will be looking into forming a club in the Austin area, potentially including activities for older children and teen similar to Tommy Holt's Railroading Class for Kids. That is still in the preliminary discussion stages.

More advanced are the plans for an NMRA Meet in November and the new and improved Austin Model Railroad Jamboree in March. The Meet will be similar to our meeting but an all-day event open to the entire Region - with a layout tour and operating sessions that weekend as well. The Jamboree will have a typical train show floor, but with convention-like events as well (clinics, a layout tour, a modeling contest and exhibition and more). The centerpiece will be a new NMRA booth our Division is working on. It will be modeled after the NMRA booth that Larry Swigert and our friends in the Trinity River Division put together. The booth (in addition to membership outreach), will host mini clinics of interest to those wishing to learn more about Model Railroading – including the construction of a fully sceniced and operational layout (or module) during

the show, a test track and other attractions. (Thanks to the TRD for the great idea!)

Busy indeed!

Division 5 Director Dave Lamberts No report

Division 6 Kevin Bergeman reported that on March 28, 2015 the South Texas Division Spring Meet was held in San Antonio, with about 30 in attendance, some from as far away as Corpus Christi. The morning was hosted by SANTRAK and the afternoon by SAMRA. The morning began with a "meet & greet" with coffee, doughnuts, and breakfast tacos. Followed by 2 clinics. Kennedy Gauger presented on using a "craft sheet cutter" to cut painting masks/friskets and how he used them to custom paint a locomotive. After a short break Frank Houzvicka presented slides and videos on "other" German model railroad tourist exhibits (there is much, much more than Miniature Wunderland). At the "show & tell" portion Al Boos showed off some "white-metal" automobiles and trucks he's working on. There were a couple of other show & tell item, but I can't for the life of me remember what they were; my apologies. Everyone headed out to lunch and many converged on SAMRA for an OPS session on their very fine HO layout.

April 11 - 12, 2015 we will descend on New Braunfels once again for the 27th Annual Train Show Jamboree. As expected it was as good a show as usual with 6 layouts and all the usual vendors. Other than SANTRAK and Aust-N-Trak were both there with separate T-Trak layouts. The GWMRS guys came up from Corpus with their very fine HO modular layout, and the Tinplate Trackers were in from Austin. TEXLUG (the Lego train guys & gals) were out in force and Nathan Oxhandler came out to represent the G-gaugers.

May 9, 2015 was AMTRAK Train Day (formerly National Train Day) in San Antonio. It is usually well organized by the San Antonio Railroad Heritage Museum (SARHM, those are the folks working to restore SP 794), but due to very unforeseen circumstances, participation was very limited. The day before the event the city inspected the area and condemned the covered train platform. Which just happened to be where most of the exhibitors were supposed to set up. Many of them either heard about it or showed up Saturday morning and decided to not participate. Of course AMTRAK decided to add to the mayhem and the trains were running late also. But it all worked out in the end, the public seemed to enjoy the exhibitors that did stay with a great deal of smiles to be seen.

We had planned to hold another Division Meet in June; however, due to unforeseen circumstances (SANTRAK, our host organization lost their clubhouse facility) the Meet fell through. We try again in the late Summer/Fall after the LSR Convention.

By the time this is published SAMRA's 17th Annual Summer Family Train show will be over (July 25 & 26). It is unfortunate that the TX-LA Doodlebug was scheduled the same weekend, I know a number of people had "rock and a hard place" decision to make about which to attend. I know for sure that SANTRAK and AustN-trak will exhibit, but I'm not sure who else.

Up-coming events include AMRE's 27th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 3 – 4, 2015 and NBRRM's 7th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 31 – Nov 1, 2015. Notice they are both in October, it's going to be a very busy month

Division 7 Director Don Kimmell reported that Membership in Division 7 remains fairly steady. Lack of "local" shows does impact recruiting. I am fairly optimistic that the Shreveport show (May 2015) has some potential to recruiting efforts. The organizers are planning a 2-day event in May 2016, and have stated to me I may have a booth for the NMRA/LSR.

We now have 3 members who are Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers -Tom White, Warren Cailleff and myself. We feel by doing these presentations, we can also recruit for the LSR/NMRA. Since our orientation/training seminar, we have been given booths/tables at 4 events, Tyler Train Show, Shreveport's Train Show, Jefferson Train Days and the Kansas City Southern Historical Society's Annual Convention. All these organizations have allowed/encouraged us to recruit more modelers.

During the previous six (6) months, I have done three (3) Boy Scout merit badge orientations, West Monroe, Gibbsland and Bastrop/Mer Rouge. I have been contacted by the Scoutmaster of the troop in the Jonesboro/Hodge to do a "class" sometime in September of this year.

While I have been visiting these areas of the state, I usually try and contact any "local" members to visit and listen to their concerns. The only re-occurring issue concerns the Marker Lamp going digital. When I explain the economics to the individuals, they for the most part agree with the Board's decision on going totally on-line. The few who don't want/have Internet service, I will continue to print and mail to them.

Division 8 Director Jim Lemmond reported that Ray Byer, Division 8 President, has restored the monthly model railroad clinics after the original meeting location became unavailable to the Division. Ray is providing clinics once a month on a rotating location basis to make these clinics available to as many members as possible. Ray's schedule for the remainder of 2015 is:

Here is the schedule for the upcoming clinic for Division 8:

July 18th at 11:00 A.M.

Location: Spring Creek BBQ at 4220 West FM 1960 of (Stuebner-Airline) Houston, Texas, 77068.
The clinic is on making a DCC sound box car.

August 22nd at 10:00 A.M.

Location: 2114 Mossey Creek Dr. in Deer Park, Texas. The clinic is on installing a decoder into a Athearn Blue box locomotive.

Annual Division 8 meeting:

September 26th. at 11:00 A.M. (Meeting, Election, and Food) at Zube Park hosted By H.A.L.S

Train rides (start time to be posted later) provided by H.A.L.S and food provided by Division 8. At this time we will try to hold a chili cook-off if we have people or teams.

Thanks Ray for your hard work in getting these events going for the Division.

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club has changed its' location on the internet. The new location is: <http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/>

The Rosenberg Railroad Museum in Rosenberg, Texas, is offering summer model railroading clinics for stu-

dents by members of the Ft. Bend County Model Railroad Club. Their activities are listed in the June 2015, "Derail" of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club:

<http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/resources/Derails/Derail-2015/Derail-Newsletter-2015-06.pdf> and on the Rosenberg Railroad Museum web site: <http://www.rosenbergrrmuseum.org/programs/>

It's full steam ahead for the LSR 2015 Convention in Beaumont. The dates are July 22, 2015, to July 25, 2015. The Convention's website is found at: <http://www.lsr2015.com/>

The clinic schedule is complete with many interesting clinics and clinic presenters. We are looking forward to seeing our Texas and Louisiana members at this convention.

In September, Houston will host a world class model road convention focusing on narrow gauge railroads. This convention attracts many model railroaders from countries outside the United States. The clinics are world class presented by well-known craftsmen drawn from a national setting. The best of Houston area layouts will be open for tours. Several high quality display layouts will be at the convention hotel. The National Narrow Gauge Convention 2015's website is: <http://www.nngc-2015.com/>

Division 8 is a co-sponsor for the National Narrow Gauge Convention 2015.

Director-At-Large Duane Richardson reported that since the Mid-Year I have continued to support Div 3 with their monthly meetings. This has involved in being available to for Q&A, Judging models, and presenting a monthly tips presentation. I proposed and help run a set of clinics on scratchbuilding a MOW shed. I am hosting a weathering clinic for July. I am also assisting in the 2016 LSR Convention planning and will be assisting a few committees. For the Plano and Ft Worth Train shows, I continue to offer free public clinics on tree making, weathering, or other requested topics.

Director-At-Large Art Houston reported that In the past year I along with Chris Atkins have been working on the communication aspects of the LSR-NMRA. We have created both a Facebook Page and a Facebook group for the LSR.

These communications avenues are now available for all members of the LSR and for all model railroad people who are interested in the hobby. The Lone Star Region Group allows all to post their activities in the hobby. They can post pictures, stories, and videos of what they are doing and all that view the group can see post and those that join the group can see and post.

LSR-NMRA Home Page. Link.

<https://www.facebook.com/lonestarregion>

Lone Star Region of the NMRA group page. Link

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/717149681747027/>

I have been and continue to discuss a way that the LSR can change its current convention structure so it will attract a larger group of participants and will help lead them to joining the LSR.

All things change and we need to step up and make a change in the convention format or we will be changed, and not have control.

Director-At-Large Chuck Lind reported that his report is short and sweet.
Hosted and toured a number of Railroad tours at the Long Leaf Saw Mill, like the North Texas Group in April.

In June I put on a program of model railroading at the Navasota Library summer program series according to the library the count was just over 40 children plus parents.

Scheduled a Cub Scout pack to visit my railroad mid-July to learn about model railroading as a hobby.

Currently working on the National Narrow Gauge Convention to be held in Houston in September.

Planned the programs for the monthly San Jacinto Model RR Club since the last Board Meeting. Will also be presenting the Program at the club next week and will be doing a clinic at the LSR Convention.

Department Reports

Achievement Chair Duane Richardson reported:

We have had a good year in the AP. We have had a submission to National in every month except December and June. Eleven different modelers submitted and were awarded 21 different National certificates. I have purchased a box on envelopes to mail the certificates to members who are not available to give it them personally. I have the cost of the envelopes and the postage but the file folder with the receipts has gone missing. If I am unable to find it I have no problem with these costs being donated to the LSR.

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Certificates/Awards for the year:

Prototype Modeler
Chuck Lind
Jerry Wilson

Electrical
Gert Muller

Volunteer
Blake Bogs

Scenery
Mickey Taylor

Author
Donna Orr

Civil
Gert Muller

Cars
Lee Bangma

It's also worth noting that Prototype Modeler for Chuck give him all 11 certificates and makes him only the 3rd person in the LSR to do it. (Loren Nuefeld and Jim Packer are the other 2).

Membership Co-chairs Larry Swigert, Mike Mackey reported that In a time where memberships in hobbyist organizations are going down in numbers, including many of the other NMRA Regions/Divisions, I am happy to report that in the overall picture, the LSR is either gaining in membership or at least "holding its own".

Here are the numbers. Think about it.

Division	2003	2015	Gain	Loss
1 - Ft. Worth	117	163	46	
2 - New Orleans	89	110	21	
3 - Dallas	149	217	68	
4 - Austin	102	136	19	
5 - Lubbock	53	42		-11
6 - San Antonio	127	118		-13
7 - Shreveport	32	24		-8
8 - Houston	256	237		-19
*Dallas/Ft.Worth	266	380	114	
Gain and Loss Totals			154	-51

12 LSR YEAR GROWTH 925 1047 (12% growth))

Also note, last year I shipped more than 200 pounds of materials to various Divisions for NMRA outreach activities in their Divisions.

That service is available to you and your Division too AT NO CHARGE!

Just ask and ye' shall receive.

Convention Chair Jack Merkel reported that:

1 – Convention Handbook

The convention handbook has been posted on the LSR website. A couple of pages have been added to address committee size and convention planning timeline. We will no longer produce any paper copies of the handbook.

2 – 2017 Convention

In the past, we had a convention rotation among divisions as follows – Houston, DFW, San Antonio, wild card (Lubbock, Austin, Louisiana).

Division 6 (San Antonio) would be the next in line for 2017 Convention. They spent a few months looking for a suitable site and for committee members. However, there was not enough interest to host a convention there. Their last convention was in 2010.

Division 2 (Louisiana) wants to see what happens at the Beaumont Convention before committing to a convention in Louisiana.

Division 4 (Austin/Round Rock) is taking over the Austin Jamboree Train Show and is busy for the next couple of years absorbing that task. They may be available to host again about 2020.

It takes 2 years to properly organize and plan a convention. See the timeline in the Convention Handbook.

At this meeting, we need to decide how to proceed in the future. The current rotation appears to be Dallas, wild card, Houston, Fort Worth.

Publications Chair Riley Trigs reported that he began duties as Marker Lamp editor and publications chair in earnest on or about 1 January of 2013 and have established a very smooth production process. I continue to have great support from chairs and directors, and I have started to attract other contributors. The additions of Gert "Speed" Muller and Bob Batson have begun to expand the reach and range of submissions to the ML, and will allow us to shift our attention to improving the quality of submissions and presentation of those submissions.

Focus during this next year will be on featuring layouts of region members, as well as contest and AP recognition.

Update: We have started presenting layout articles as well as an AP column. An operations column by Peter-Kazmir has also been started as well as a re-boot of a modeling column by Duane Richardson.

I have not incurred any expenses this year.

Advertising in Pike and Dealer ads needs attention. There has been some interest in upgrading ads to color, but no new pike nor dealers are participating. There has been no particular effort to acquire new ads this year, but this is an ongoing situation.

Update: No progress has been made in this area.

While updating and improving the Marker Lamp is the first task and main priority, I will begin to explore the possibilities for other longer range projects for publications. Initial ideas are in the realm of an historical narrative of the region's activities, profiles of the region's modelers and layouts, compilations of clinics and presentations at LSR conventions, etc. Projects may also include expanded media to include video, etc. that can take full advantage of digital delivery methods. Ideas, support and labor for these projects will also be solicited from the membership.

Update: No progress has been made in this area.

Website Chair Jeff Palmer reported that:

The "Officer's Only Page" has been updated to include the current "Convention Guide".

The "Election Bios" was added as the first step towards electronic balloting. Since the election has ended, that page has been shut down.

The "Calendar" has been made available to all BOD members to post Division and LSR activities. Several Division Directors have done so.

Developing electronic voting for the LSR on the www.geekwithtrains.com website. Solved the "write-in" issue. Now, I have to solve the "Division only" voting issue.

Other activities performed include:

- 1) Aiding with the 2015 Convention committee with e-mail blasts.
- 2) Aiding the 2016 Convention committee with setting up the www.daylightexpress.com website.

Nominating Chair Blake Bogs reported that we had 107 votes. This is down from the 2013 election (112 votes), 2014 election (around 120 votes), and the 2014 constitution change (141 votes).

President: Winner- Steve Barkley
Vice President: Winner- Bob Barnett
Secretary: Winner- Jeff Palmer
Treasurer: Winner- Donna Orr
Division 1 Director: Winner- Chris Atkins
Division 3: Winner- Jerry Hoverson
Division 5: Winner- David Lambert
Division 7: Winner- Don Kimmel

Division 2, 4, 6, 8 and Directors at Large---Running on 2016 Ballot
Nomination Period will open up October 15. You will have till December 18th to announce you are running for office and submit a biography

We are planning on testing out online elections during the 2015 Constitution Changes Election
Nomination Committee is now having regular meetings
We are submitting a motion (Motion 6) to clarify the offices of Director at-Large

Events Chair, Bill Dryden reported that Marker Lamp columns have been submitted. There have been lots of activity in the railroading community at times, one column in particular was rather lengthy. We continue to seek information from the members about up-coming events in a timely manner. It is always a bit frustrating to have event notices come in a week or so after submittal to the editor, worse when I read about an event that would have been great to have published, but never notified.

Education Chair, Officer position open – No report

Youth Chair Bob Mangrum reported that to date one youth has been nominated and was voted on at Mid-Winter Meeting:
Division 8 Stewart Schweers

Bob is turning over the Youth Chair to Dave Cummings

Dave submitted: The South Texas Division nominates Vincent Clemmings as the Division Candidate for the LSR Youth Member Program. Vincent is 16 years old and has been a member of both the NMRA and the San Antonio N-Trak Association (SANTRAK) for just over 1 year (joined July 2014). Vincent is fairly new to model railroading with limited skills so far, but a keen interest to learn and participate. His interest in N scale trains led him to join SANTRAK.

Parliamentarian Bob Mangrum reported that there nothing to report.

Bob is turning over the Parliamentarian Chair to John Garfield

2015 Convention Chair George Bohn Final convention report not ready. During his brief presentation, LSR President Steve Barkley announced that George Bohn will co-chair the Convention Chair with Jack Merkel.

2016 Convention Chair Mike Mackey/John Garfield reported that Progress on the 2016 Daylight Express Super Regional Convention (www.daylightexpress.com) continues to be positive and "on track". The convention committee only has a few slots that aren't filled and the members are completing their assigned tasks promptly.

At this time, we have 8 rail tours confirmed, and are working on 4 others. Those include: a tour of the GE locomotive plant, a tour of the FW & W rail facility, tours of the BNSF TOFC facility as well as Alliance yard, a tour of the Six Flags steam engine facility and the list goes on. The non-rail tours look to be fantastic, with the addition of a number of things that have never been considered for previous conventions. Begin looking for promotional ads in magazines and newsletters, as well as email blasts beginning in September 2015. Early registrants for the convention will have the opportunity to win Texas Rangers tickets, compliments of the Arlington Convention and Visitors Bureau. They are also offering us other items from their "goody" basket which include Six Flags tickets, as well as tickets to Hurricane Harbor. We are still trying to put together a way to give a free t-shirt to every attendee that registers early. We'll see how that works out. Registration is set at \$75.00 for early registration until 4-15-16, and then jumps to \$90.00 thereafter, so register early and save some money!

We anticipate a record attendance at this convention, and with that in mind, we have already begun preparation for additional lodging at adjacent hotels, complete with complimentary shuttle service, to and from the host hotel.

New to this convention will be a Thursday evening catered buffet barbeque dinner located in Saginaw, Texas at the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce office (a former Cotton Belt Depot) which is located along the mainline junction of the BNSF and the UP. Currently, Saginaw sees over 90 trains a day through this mainline corridor. The chamber has agreed to set up a scanner which will be broadcast over a PA system so that rail fans can listen to the dispatchers of both the BNSF and the UP during the mixer/dinner. Attendees can stay as long into the night to watch trains as they wish. BYOB. The cost of this dinner is included in the registration.

See you there!

OLD BUSINESS

Donna Orr Status of 501 (C)(3) – DONE!!!! Thank you Donna!!

Donna Orr provided a budget report, Bob Burnett provided a motion and seconded by Kevin Bergeman to approve the budget as submitted. Highlights of the budget are as follows: income from Marker Lamp ads is \$283, profit from 2014 convention is \$3,653.11, Repayment of 2014 Convention loan \$2000, NMRA rebate is \$1,919 and interest is \$3.01 which totals \$7,858.12. Expense for meetings, postage, AP, contest, historian, membership, youth and memorial donations is \$2,965.13, advance to 2015 convention \$2,000, advance to 2016 convention \$2,000 and 501c3 \$400 which totals \$7,365.13. This will be a gain in net worth of \$493.99. A motion to add line item Audio/Visual (A/V) with an annual budget of \$100 was approved by the BOD. The motion to approve the new budget with the new line item (A/V), designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 3, passed.

Donna reported that the LSR money is earning less than 1% interest and request that LSR look into investment opportunities that would NOT tie up the funds, limiting accessibility to them, but earn more interest. A committee was appointed headed by Donna Orr was appointed. The committee consists of Donna Orr,

Kevin Bergeman, Art Houston, and Peter Kazmir. Motion on Investment options, designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 4, was tabled until the 2016 mid-year meeting.

Jeff Palmer reported on the availability of the Electronic Convention Guide. It is available in the Officer's Only section of the website.

Donna Orr presented the results of the election committee on Staggered Elections. The committee detailed the Constitution changes required. After some discussion, the BOD decided to match up the Offices of President and Treasurer for one stagger and Vice President and Secretary for the second stagger. The BOD approved the Motion to move forward and hold a membership election on the on Stagger Elections, designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 5.

Blake Bogs presented the need for greater clarification in the Constitution on the election of Director's-At-Large. The BOD approved the motion to add the clarification to the upcoming Constitution change vote; designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 6.

Donna Orr reported that during the process of reviewing the LSR Constitution for the Stagger Elections, there were a number of sections that needed greater clarification. These opportunities were presented to the BOD in the form of a motion designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 7. The BOD approved the motion to be part of the constitution vote.

A tabled item about the creation of the LSR Facebook page was reintroduced for by Art Houston. The LSR Facebook page has been met with great success and the BOD approved the tabled motion, re-designated as 2015-07-26 LSR Motion 8.

Chuck Lind reported that there were no entries for the Bob Clarke Award this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve Barkley opened the new business portion of the annual meeting with the Ratification of Election and Recognition of new Officers. With their presentation and acceptance, motion designated as 2015-01-02 LSR Motion 9 passed.

Blake Bogs requested permission to destroy the previous election ballots. Motion designated as 2015-01-02 LSR Motion 10 passed allowing the destruction of the ballots.

Vincent Clemmings was presented as the Youth nomination from Division 6. Dave Cummings, the new Youth Chair, made the presentation and the BOD approved; motion designated as 2015-01-02 LSR Motion 11.

Mike Mackey introduced the idea of an LSR Youth Scholarship Fund for \$500. After much discussion, it was determined that the LSR could not afford the scholarship at this time.

In keeping with our new 501(c)(3) status, Donna Orr introduced concept that some of the funds being returned to the region, \$2 per member per year, be used to further the education cause. A committee consisting of Donna Orr (chair), Jerry Hoverson, Dave Cummings, and Blake Bogs was appointed to study the possibilities and report back by the mid-year meeting in January 2016.

Also, in keeping with our new 501(c)(3) status, Donna Orr introduced new duties for the Education Chair to collect and report LSR educational activities. In general, the idea was well accepted, but then placed into Donna's Educational Funds Committee for study and reported back on at the mid-year meeting in January 2016.

Peter Kazmir, Division 4 Director, announced that the Austin division would like to be put into the rotation for the annual convention. This was met with applause and a lot of praise. Peter also announced that wouldn't be until 2019 that they would be ready to go the rotation, possibly 2018. This is great news, especially for Houston and Dallas/Ft Worth divisions.

Jeff Palmer expressed the need for a consistent business calendar. The budget is determined by LSR's Fiscal year (May 1 to April 20), but the LSR business calendar is based on the convention which could occur anytime from April to September. The BOD save the reason for the change and approved the use of the fiscal calendar as the basis for the business calendar. All officers will begin office on May 1 and their term will conclude on April 30 of the year their 2 year term terminates.

Blake Bogs expressed a concern about the availability of address and phone number information being available on the website. After some discussion, it was approved that the single home address line can be "opted" out by each officer. Written request must be submitted – yes this means an email or letter.

Jeff Palmer brought up the need to have greater clarification of officers and their duties. In looking at the list of officers and chairs, are all of them needed? Are there positions that are needed but don't currently exist; i.e. Fund Raiser Chair? Why are there eight Divisions? Should there be more or less divisions? Can divisions be merged to provide greater efficiency? What are the duties of the Director's-At-Large? Why are there three? All of these questions need to be documented for the IRS.

George Bohn was still in the process of forming up the convention report. He knew that there were 107 registered attendees and that all seemed to enjoy themselves.

Mike Mackey and John Garfield retitled the 2016 convention are the "Super Regional" and presented a stirring presentation of why we want to attend the Arlington, TX convention in 2016. This was a slide presentation.

Steve Barkley provided a few concluding words of praise, and called for the motion to conclude the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 PM.

Director Reports



Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins

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214.222.1285

cowcatcherdivision.com

Since the January board meeting we have once again started having regular division meetings: one in March and one in May.

In March we met at Michael Ross' home and visited his fantastic O-Scale Appalachian coal railroad.

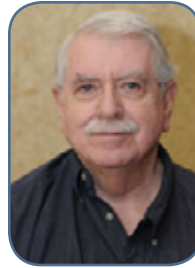
In May we met at the Handley Center and I put on a clinic using my Cricut cutter to make model railroad structures. I demonstrated cutting the walls of a CB&Q depot I have been working on and made a show how to cut vinyl by making a Cotton Belt sticker.

We also had the first 2016 convention-planning meeting at the Handley Center in April. We had a good attendance, and co-chairs John Garfield and Mike Mackey are doing a great job planning a fantastic show in Arlington.

I was asked to do the registration for the 2015 convention in Beaumont and have been receiving forms and forwarding checks to the convention treasurer.

The Division continues to be active in the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs. The big change for this year is that we are going to have a September show in Plano as well as a January show. Both will have clinics, where before, we didn't do clinics at Ft. Worth, so the LSR will continue to promote the hobby thru its educational mission.

The sad part of this, of course, is that we no longer have a Council Train show in Division 1. This was a difficult decision to come to, but ultimately the Council voted to leave Ft. Worth after the city continued to price itself out not only with the Amon Carter venue, but also with \$10 per day parking.



Bayou Division 2

by Rod Fredericks

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225-939-0187

It's another hot July summer here in south Louisiana and the order of the day for layout rooms and clubs is turn the AC's to max. mode.

Activities in District 2 have been brisk over the past three months. The Mid-South Model Railroad club has already hosted three of their bi-monthly operating sessions with the next one coming up on August 1st. Sessions were also run on Art Houston's layout in Houma, the Crescent City Model Railroad Club in the New Orleans area, and Lake Area Model Railroaders (LAMRR) layout in Lake Charles, LA. And then there is the LSR convention just over the state line in Beaumont, TX to look forward to next week.

Of particular note is the "Rail Run Louisiana" a few months ago. This is an annual event organized by LSR Director at Large Art Houston and hosted by the Mid-South MMC here in Baton Rouge. Some twenty guests traveled from Texas and Mississippi for the three day event. Operation sessions were run on layouts at the Mid-South Model Railroad Club in Baton Rouge and the Crescent City Model Railroad Club in the New Orleans area, and at Art's home layout in Houma, LA. And then there was a banquet of excellent south Louisiana seafood, followed by tours at two Baton Rouge layouts not on the operating schedule.

As mentioned in the last Marker Lamp issue, I and a few friends are planning a series of Saturday morning, informal clinics on various modeling topics. The plan is to start in the fall with clinics once a month. DCC wiring and tree making will be among the first topics as I will be presenting these clinics in Beaumont. From there we hope to extend this series to other model railroading topics. Anyone interested in attending, either as presenters or learners, please contact me at fredericks.rod@gmail.com to get on the communication list.

On a personal note, work continues on my home layout. Maybe by Christmas I might even be ready for an operating session!

So that's all for now. Happy Model Railroading.



North East Texas Division 3

by Jerry Hoverson, MMR

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972.540.5315

Whew, it's hot, Summer is definitely here. Well it's too hot for outside projects so off to the train room, Woo Hoo!

As mentioned in my last report we started a scratch building project, a "speeder shed" and divided the group by skill levels. This took up a total of 4 meetings with the last being devoted to weathering. In August we will have everyone bring in their finished sheds and have a popular vote contest as well as score many of them for the achievement program.

In the coming months you can look forward to some more great clinics as well as our annual Holiday Party and Donna & Roger's.

One of the coming clinics will be on the "Arduino". Gert Muller will be leading this and has obtained all the materials we'll need. Each member working on this will decide what he/she wants the Arduino to do and Gert will help everyone with assembly and coding the Arduino. Looking forward to seeing some great railroad animation!

Lot's more to come so "Keep rolling down the tracks" and we'll see you next time!



CenTex Division 4

by Peter Kazmir

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CenTexNMRA.org

Summertime is here, and we celebrated by holding a division meeting on May 9 at the Round Rock Library. Dick Sowash gave an outstanding clinic about building and painting plaster structures. In addition, Jerry Wilson led a discussion about the NMRA Achievement Program and his experiences working towards Master Model Railroader.

Division AP Coordinator Jack Merkel contributed as well. As always, we had a great collection of Show and Tell items and we had our usual social time and Deal or Duds. After the meeting, we headed to David (and Sam) Nicastro's house to tour (and operate!) their three model railroads, including the excellent Denver & Rio Grande Western Moffat Route. More pictures from the meeting and layout tour are online at <http://centexnmra.org/meetings/2015-05.html>.

David Barrow, Pete Guy, Jack Merkel, Chuck Ellis, David Nicastro and others have all hosted operating sessions during the past few months as well.

You're Invited!

The Cen-Tex Division will be hosting an NMRA Meet on November 14. The event will be similar to our regular meetings but bigger and better! We're planning on having several clinics to choose from on topics including scenery, operations, DCC, weathering and prototypes, a contest and exhibition, Q&A, experts to help you get started and keep going, plenty of social time, and an Austin-area layout tour (which, in the past at least, has featured over 30 layouts)! We will also have operating sessions on Friday and Sunday.

There will be a small charge for admission to help cover costs – but did I mention that includes lunch?! The event will be from 9:00 am until 3:30 pm at St. David's Episcopal Church in downtown Austin. Look for all the details on our division web site. We hope to see you there.

We'll probably hold another meet in the fall of 2016 as well, as it looks like the next Austin Model Railroad Jamboree will probably be held in the spring of 2017. It will be worth the wait, though, as we are planning to include all of the things that made the Jamboree a great time in the past plus even more clinics, a contest and exhibition, our new NMRA booth, and operating layouts at the show – all at an all-new and much larger location than in the past. All that and an operations weekend in Austin! We are working hard to finalize plans soon. Be watching for more details.

Our next division meeting will be on August 29 starting at 10:00 am at the Round Rock Library. Riley Triggs will be giving a clinic on 3-D printing in model railroading. We will also have our DCC Minute, Show and Tell Table, social time, and Deal or Duds. After the meeting we will be touring Charles Etheredge's home layout based on the Southern Pacific from Houston to Llano in the 1940's.

The library is located at 216 E. Main St. in Round Rock. On I-35, exit at RR 620 (Exit 252B) and proceed East on RR 620 for a few blocks to the intersection with Main St. and continue East on Main St. for another block and half to the library on the left. A map and more information about the meeting can be found at <http://centexnmra.org/meetingnotice.html>.



Division 5

by Dave Lamberts
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There has been some talk at our local hobby shop regarding an “all hobby” meeting. This would include a coalition of the various modeler clubs in Lubbock such as the Lubbock Model Railroad Association, the Military Modelers, the Plastic Modelers, etc. I guess one could even include the doll house group.

I am sure there are lots of things we could learn from each other. The military modelers are great airbrushers.

Have any of the other clubs ever tried anything like this? Let me know.



Division 6

by Kevin Bergeman
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May 9, 2015 was AMTRAK Train Day (formerly National Train Day) in San Antonio. It is usually well organized by the San Antonio Railroad Heritage Museum (SARHM, those are the folks working to restore SP 794), but due to very unforeseen circumstances, participation was very limited.

The day before the event the city inspected the area and condemned the covered train platform. Which just happened to be where most of the exhibitors were supposed to set up. Many of them either heard about it or showed up Saturday morning and decided to not participate. Of course AMTRAK decided to add to the mayhem and the trains were running late also. But it all worked out in the end, the public seemed to enjoy the exhibitors that did stay with a great deal of smiles to be seen.

We had planned to hold another Division Meet in June; however, due to unforeseen circumstances (SANTRAK, our host organization lost their clubhouse facility) the Meet fell through. We will try again in the late Summer/Fall after the LSR Convention.

By the time this is published SAMRA's 17th Annual Summer Family Train show will be over (July 25 & 26). It is unfortunate that the TX-LA Doodlebug was scheduled the same weekend, I know a number of people had “rock and a hard place” decision to make about which to attend. I know for sure that SANTRAK and AustNtrak will exhibit, but I'm not sure who else.

Up-coming events include AMRE's 27th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 3 – 4, 2015 and NBRM's 7th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 31 – Nov 1, 2015. Notice they are both in October, it's going to be a very busy month.



**Click to join the Lone Star
Region and the NMRA
at nmra.org**



Division 7
by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@mac.com
318.798.7718

Hello again from wet North Louisiana, and yes we are getting hot also!

As far as I know, we did not lose any layouts or members to the flooding of the Red River; I am not sure how the eastern end of the state made out, as I have not received any negative information from that area.

By the time you will be reading this the convention will be over, and I know everyone will have had a great time. George and his Minions have put a lot of hard work into this year's event. I will have not attended this year, have a prior family event out of state, but I am sorry I couldn't make it. It is always great to see everyone. I hope everyone enjoys!

As to upcoming events, well, there really are not any scheduled here for Division 7, the fall is full all over the state of Texas, so me thinks there may be a couple of weekend road trips in the future.

Now what has happened this past 3 months...well, the Tyler show was fun as usual, they had a great crowd with a good selection of vendors. I know a couple of folks that did spend a good bit of money; the deals were too good to pass up!!! The Cotton Belt folks told me this was the 3rd largest crowd ever, and they have already started planning for next year.

Believe it or not, but Shreveport did have a train show this past May, granted it was only for one day, but they hope to do two days next year. I attended as a "vendor", representing: the LRS, the KCSHS and Operation Lifesaver, of course I had the help of Warren and Tillie (KCSHS) and Tom White (OL), but we had fun, gave away over 100 coloring books! They had 300+ paid admissions, of course a number of the folks were fathers and sons, who were ducking out of the dance event in the next hall!!!

Then the following weekend was the Jefferson Train Days. The show was bigger-think more vendors-this year, and they are planning on expanding again next year. I manned the Operation Lifesaver booth, also recruiting for the LSR. Attendance was great on Saturday, but then the rains moved in for Sunday, need I say more. Everyone was happy with the show.

I wish to welcome a new/transferred member to Division 7, Jeff Cornelli. He has moved down here from Virginia.

That is about all I have, so....PLAY Trains!!



Texas Gulf Division 8
by Jim Lemond
jimlem@verzion.net

Ray Byer, Division 8 President, has restored the monthly model railroad clinics after the original meeting location became unavailable to the Division. Ray is providing clinics once a month on a rotating location basis to make these clinics available to as many members as possible. Ray's schedule for the remainder of 2015 is:

Here is the schedule for the upcoming clinic for Division 8: August 22nd at 10:00 A.M. Location: 2114 Mossey Creek Dr. in Deer Park, Texas. The clinic is on installing a decoder into a Athearn Blue box locomotive.

Annual Division 8 meeting:

September 26th. at 11:00 A.M. (Meeting, Election, and Food) at Zube Park hosted by H.A.L.S Train rides (start time to be posted later) provided by H.A.L.S and food provided by Division 8. At this time we will try to hold a chili cook-off if we have people or teams.

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club has changed its' location on the internet. The new location is: <http://san-jacmodeltrains.org/>

The Rosenberg Railroad Museum in Rosenberg, Texas, is offering summer model railroading clinics for students by members of the Ft. Bend County Model Railroad Club. Their activities are listed in the June 2015, "Derail" of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club: <http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/resources/Derails/Derail-2015/Derail-Newsletter-2015-06.pdf> and on the Rosenberg Railroad Museum web site: <http://www.rosenbergrrmuseum.org/programs/>

In September, Houston will host a world class model road convention focusing on narrow gauge railroads. This convention attracts many model railroaders from countries outside the United States. The clinics are world class presented by well-known craftsmen drawn from a national setting. The best of Houston area layouts will be open for tours. Several high quality display layouts will be at the convention hotel. The National Narrow Gauge Convention 2015's web-site is: <http://www.nngc-2015.com/>

Division 8 is a co-sponsor for the National Narrow Gauge Convention 2015.

Chair Reports



Nominations

by Blake Bogs

superchief1520@gmail.com

(713) 254-7447

Hello y'all,

Well the LSR convention has passed. Unfortunately I was not able to attend the convention this year, but I'm sure it was a good one. It's amazing what can happen when a group of guy's come together as a team and set out to do something. A special thanks to George Bohn and his team for a great convention. It seems from the minute I leave the convention; I'm ready for the next convention. But, there is a lot to be done in the 11 months until the next convention. Some of these things include models to be built, layouts to be worked on, clinics to be prepared, and finally photos to be taken. I for one will be doing some of these things, but I will mainly be working on homework.

The same can be said of our board. For over 50 years, the LSR Board has come together for the greater good of our portion of the NMRA. I'm proud to be part of that history and I hope as time goes on, I can provide more to our board by taking other positions. Have you considered a position on the board? Many reading this will say things like "I'm too old", "I want to work on my layout," or "I have no experience." While these things could be true, you are never too old for a position on the LSR board. We always can use great minds such as yours on our board. It does not take up near as much time as you think. When I joined Steve Barkley as Nomination Co-Chair 4 years ago, I was nervous I would not be able to give up enough time to volunteer. That could not be farther from the truth. Although, I use up a lot of time creating the ballot and contact people to run, it is not near the time I thought it would take.

With all this being said, over the last 4 years many things have occurred. We are continuing to try to raise the number of ballots received. I would like to think that by producing this article every quarter, people have been reading these articles and this encourages them to vote. Unfortunately, we lost votes in the last election. The nomination committee has been reviewing the last election and we hope to change it to allow for more votes. We also have increased the number of people running against each other. This past election, we had 3 contended races. This is the most we have had in several

years. I thank everyone that ran. Y'all stepped up and your influence has greatly helped the LSR grow. Even if you didn't win, thank you so much for running.

As I always say, please strongly consider running for the LSR. Our board needs people like you to run! The 2016 election consists of our 3 Presidents at large, Division 2 Director, Division 4 Director, Division 6 Director, and Division 8 Director. If you even think you are or you know someone that are interested in running, please let me know! We need more people to volunteer and volunteering begins with members like you! The nomination period will begin on October 15 and will close December 18th.

In conclusion, please consider running for office. Our organization begins with you. It relies on you being a part of the NMRA. It relies on you attending the conventions. And finally it relies on you volunteering in the LSR. Without you, there is no present or future of LSR.



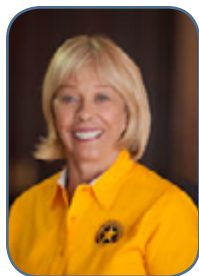
Youth Program

by Bob Mangrum, MMR
rmangrum6@hotmail.com
(325) 643-1219

The Youth Membership Program is an excellent way for the members of the LSR to bring new and young members into the NMRA and to become involved in what is truly the "world's greatest hobby."

This is the objective of the Youth Membership Program as found in Article VI of the LSR bylaws. The program is designed to sponsor up to nine young people with one year memberships in the NMRA. The total number is determined as one nominee for each division and one nominated by the elected officers and directors at large.

These nominees can originate from nominations by individuals who are members of the various divisions, clubs that are located within the divisions, and/or the division director. The proper form and a short sketch explaining why the candidate should be considered, including comments about the young person's interests and activities in model railroading comprise the application. Please refer to the bylaws for more details. If you have questions, please contact me by e-mail at: rmangrum6@hotmail.com Looking forward to announcing more awards for 2016!



Treasurer
by Donna Orr
dlo-rls@sbcbglobal.net
(972) 342-8598

Financial Report

For the Fiscal Year of 2014/2015

Beginning Balance 05/01/2014

LSR Checking Account	\$ 4,528.03
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,356.86
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$10,004.46
Acct receivable for 2015 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$36,889.35

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clark Award \$570

LSR Proceeds

Vanguard CD Fund Interest	\$ 2.04
Vanguard Convention Fund Interest	\$.97
Pike/Dealer Ad	\$ 283.00
NMRA Region Rebate	\$ 1919.00
Convention advance return RR	\$ 2000.00
Convention proceeds – RR	\$ 3653.11
Total Proceeds	\$ 7858.12

LSR Disbursements

Election printing and mailing	\$ 1242.21
BOD printing + coping expenses	\$ 312.92
Sec expenses	\$ 66.77
Convention 2015 advance	\$ 2,000.00
Convention 2016 Advance	\$ 2,000.00
501C3 Expense	\$ 400.00
Membership and Promotion expenses	\$ 80.00
Contest expenses	\$ 1,185.69
Achievement program postage	\$ 30.54
Memorial donation	\$ 47.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 7,364.13

Net Proceeds/ Disbursements \$ 493.99

Ending Balance 04/31/2015

LSR Checking Accounts Total	\$ 5,019.01
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,358.90
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$10,005.43
Acct receivable for 2015 Convention	\$2,000.00
Acct receivable for 2016 Convention	\$2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$39,383.34

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clarke Award \$ 570.00

Membership Report

At the beginning of February 2015, the membership was 1310, and at the end of April 2015 the membership was 1054.

Please welcome our new members listed below:

Division 1

George Raunam	Highland Tx
David Grein	Denton Tx
Thomas Worley	Ft Worth, Tx
Bob Stauter	Trophy Club Tx
Jeff Ritter	Richland Hills Tx
Joe Giesken	Joshua Tx
James Carney	Ft Worth Tx
Dick Brannan	N Richland Hills Tx

Division 2

Michael Bushnell	New Orleans La
Frederick Schulman	Metairie La
Greg Gish	Baton Rouge La
Joshua Concienne	Zachary La

Division 3

Morgan Orphey	Mesquite Tx
Pamela Martin	Allen Tx
David Stana	Frisco Tx
Marita	Richards Allen Tx
John Butler	Mesquite Tx
Jason Williams	Denison Tx
Thomas Whitrock	Garland Tx
David Wacht	Plano Tx
Darby Tipple	Carrollton Tx
Evan Timmons	Irving Tx
Owen Slatter	Plano Tx
Ben Skidmore	Mckinney Tx
Michael Pixley	Dallas Tx
Bill Perrott	McKinney Tx
Antonio Perez	Garland Tx
Jim Oursler	Rockwall Tx
Vance Nurmi	Garland Tx
Alan Helm	Frisco Tx
Larry Galkowski	Dallas Tx
Tom Foegle	Allen Tx
Michael Elmore	Plano Tx
Karla Dickensan	Murphy Tx
Joseph Baker	Allen Tx
Leena Agarwal	Allen Tx

Division 4

Joel Davison	Austin Tx
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Division 5

William Hogan	Lubbock Tx
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Division 7

James Ingra	Mt Vernon Tx
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Division 8

Jeryl Schmidt	Houston Tx
Chad Ponton	Clute Tx
Mason Holmes	Tomball Tx
Marvin Crews	Cypress Tx
Christopher Kithas	Katy Tx
Eddie Carroll	Houston Tx
Gregory Slutz	Bellaire Tx
Ronnie Rode	Humble Tx

Division 1

Henry Stinson	Fort Worth, Tx
Johnnie Harris	Mansfield, Tx
Cameron Wallace	Arlington, Tx

Pike Ads

Your Pike Ad can be in color! Contact Donna Orr at dlo-rls@sbcglobal.net



We meet Thursdays 7 to 10PM, and the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month (10 AM to 4 PM). Business meeting, 1st Thursday of the month. Memberships open. From I-40, take the Lakeside exit (#75). Go north on Lakeside 2.2 miles to U. S. Highway 60. Turn right, go east 3.9 miles east. Turn right on I Ave., look for the yellow building with a red roof. P. O. Box 31105, Amarillo, TX 79120 (806) 336-3333. www.amarillorailmuseum.com



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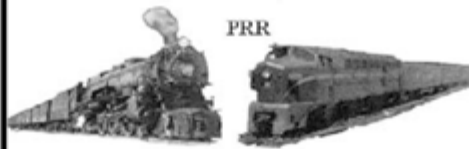


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Gilbert Freitag Houston, Texas

NEVADUN RAILROAD

Jim Packer
Colleyville, Texas 76034
817-514-7291
E-mail - jim.packer@sbcglobal.net
Website - WWW.NEVADUNRAILROAD.COM



San Antonio Model Railroad Association

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GrandePacificModelRR.org
YouTube Channel: arthurhouston3

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BATON ROUGE, LA

MEETINGS: EVERY TUESDAY @ 7:00PM
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SANTAFE@TLXNET.NET

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without you

Next Issue
November 2015

Deadline for
submissions is
October 15



submittals and inquiries | rileytriggs@gmail.com